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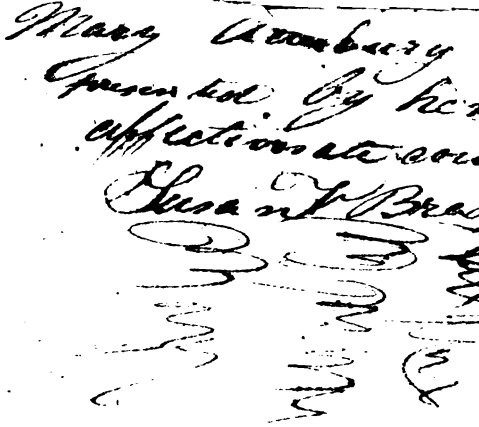

ESSAYS

MORAL AND LITERARY.

BY

VICESIMUS KNOX, M. A.

A NEW EDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

ΦΗΙΔΙΗ Δ' ΗΠΕΙΤΑ ΠΕΔΗΣΙ.

HESIOD.

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ESSAYS,

MORAL, &c.

No. LXXXII. ON THE MEANS OF READING WITH THE MOST ADVANTAGE.

IT is certain, that there are many ſtudents who impair their health in a continual courſe of reading and literary labour, without any adequate returns of pleaſure or improvement. They read, indeed, becauſe they conſider it as a duty, or becauſe they are endeavouring to accompliſh themſelves for the practice of a profeſſion; but they are ready to confeſs, that the whole tenour of their ſtudies is one continued toil, and that the pleaſure they derive from them is by no means a recompence for exhauſted ſpirits and habitual melancholy.

With a view to relieve ſtudents of this deſcription, who are uſually virtuous and amiable, I will endeavour to ſuggeſt a few hints, which may poſſibly contribute to render their reading more agreeable and advantageous. But I wiſh to premiſe, that in what I now ſay, and in whatever I have ſaid, in the ſtyle of direction and advice, I mean only to offer, not to obtrude; to ſubmit, and not to dictate.

In order to receive the proper advantage from reading, it muſt be rendered a pleaſing employment. Human nature is ſo conſtituted, that no practice will be con-

tinued long and regularly, which is not attended with ſome degree of pleaſure. We enter upon a ſtudy which is irkſome and diſguſtful with reluctance, we attend to it ſuperficially, and we relinquiſh it without reflecting upon it in a degree ſufficient for the purpoſe of improvement. Inſtead of thinking of it uniformly and ſteadily, we drive it from our minds as the cauſe of uneaſineſs. But the heart and affections, the imagination and the memory, co-operate with the underſtanding, in deriving all poſſible advantage from the ſtudy which we love.

The firſt and moſt important object is, therefore, to form a ſtrong attachment to thoſe parts of ſcience, or to thoſe books, which our judgment impels us to ſtudy. There are various methods conducive to this end; but, perhaps, none are more effectual, than that of converſing with men of ſenſe and genius on the books and the ſubject on which we purpoſe to read. There is a warmth and ſpirit in converſation, which renders ſubjects, which might otherwiſe appear cold and lifeleſs, intereſting and animated. When the company is departed, and the converſation at an end, we are naturally inclined to ſee what has been ſaid in books on the ſubjects diſcuſſed; and the light let in by the preceding converſation is an excellent introduction to our enquiries.

As ſoon as we have acquired, by actual reading, a competent knowledge of a book or particular ſubject, it will contribute greatly to animate us in proceeding ſtill further, if we talk of it either with our equals in attainments, or with the learned and experienced. We advance an opinion, our ſelf-love renders us ſolicitous to maintain it, we ſeek the aid of a book as an auxiliary, we therefore read it with eager attention; and I believe it will be difficult to avoid loving that which we attend to frequently and with eagerneſs.

Indeed, if we can once fix our attention very cloſely to a good book, nothing more will be neceſſary to make us love it: As in nature, when two bodies approach each other very nearly, the attraction of coheſion faſtens them together; ſo when the mind attaches itſelf cloſely to any ſubject whatever, it becomes,

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as it were, united to it, and gravitates towards it with a ſpontaneous velocity. There is, indeed, no ſtudy ſo dry, but by fixing our attention upon it, we may at laſt find it capable of affording great delight. Metaphyſics and mathematics, even in their abſtruſeſt parts, are known to give the attentive ſtudent a very exalted ſatisfaction. Thoſe parts then of human learning, which in their nature are more entertaining, cannot fail of being beloved in a high degree, when the mind is cloſely and conſtantly applied to them.

In order to acquire the power and habit of fixing the attention, it will at firſt be neceſſary to ſummon a very conſiderable degree of reſolution, In beginning the ſtudy of a new language, or any book or ſcience, which preſents ideas totally ſtrange, the mind cannot but feel ſome degree of reluctance or diſguſt. But perſevere; and, in a very ſhort time, the diſguſt will vaniſh, and you will be rewarded with entertainment. Till this takes place, make it an inviolable rule, however diſagreeable, to read a certain quantity, or for a certain time, and you will infallibly find, that what you began as a taſk, you will continue as an amuſement.

There are many ſtudents who ſpend their days in extracting paſſages from authors, and fairly tranſcribing them in their common-place book; a mode of ſtudy truly wretched, which ſeldom repays the ſtudent either with profit or pleaſure, which waſtes his time, and wears out his eyes and his conſtitution. I moſt ſeriouſly adviſe all thoſe unhappy ſtudents, who have been led to think, that the exerciſe of the hand can impreſs ideas on the brain; who interrupt their attention by copying; who torture themſelves in abridging, and who think, by filling their pocket-books, that they ſhall enrich their underſtandings, to ſtop while they have eyes to ſee, or fingers to write. They have totally miſtaken the road to learning; and, if they proceed in the way too long a time, they may ſuffer ſuch injuries in it as ſhall diſable them from returning, or ſeeking a better. After many years ſpent in this wretched labour, it is no wonder that they cloſe their books, and make the old complaint of vanity and vexation. Nothing really ſerves us in reading, but what the mind

makes its own by reflection and memory. That which is transcribed is not in the least more appropriated than when it stood in the printed page. It is an error, if any suppose, that by the act of marking the words on paper with a pen, the ideas are more clearly marked on the brain than by attentive reading.

The best method of extracting and epitomizing, is to express the author's ideas, after shutting his book, in our own words. In this exercise, the memory is exerted, and the style improved. We make what we write our own; we think, we are active, and we do not condemn ourselves to an employment merely manual and mechanical. But, after all, whatever a few may say, write, or think, it is certain, that the greatest scholars were content with reading, without making either extracts or epitomes. They were satisfied with what remained in their minds after a diligent perusal, and when they wrote, they wrote their own. Reading is, indeed, most justly called the food of the mind. Like food, it must be digested and assimilated; it must shew its nutritive power by promoting growth and strength, and by enabling the mind to bring forth sound and vigorous productions. It must be converted *in succum et sanguinem*, into juice and blood, and not make its appearance again in the form in which it was originally imbibed. It is indeed true, and the instance may be brought in opposition to my doctrine, that Demosthenes transcribed Thucydides eight times with his own hand; but it should be remembered, that Demosthenes flourished before printing was discovered, and that he was induced to transcribe Thucydides, not only for the sake of improvement, but also for the sake of multiplying copies of a favourite author.

A due degree of variety will contribute greatly to render reading agreeable. For though it is true, that not more than one or two books should be read at once, yet, when they are finished, it will be proper, if any weariness is felt, to take up an author who writes in a different style, or on a different subject; to change from poetry to prose, and from prose to poetry; to intermix the moderns with the ancients; alternately to lay down the book and to take up the pen; and sometimes

times to lay them both down, and enter with alacrity into agreeable company and public diverſions. The mind, after a little ceſſation, returns to books with all the voracious eagerneſs of a literary hunger. The intermiſſions muſt not be long, or frequent enough to form a habit of idleneſs or diſſipation.

He who would read with pleaſure (and I repeat, that all who read with real profit muſt read with pleaſure), will attend to the times of the day, and the ſeaſons of the year. The morning has been univerſally approved as the beſt time for ſtudy; the afternoon may be moſt advantageouſly ſpent in improving converſation. Thoſe faculties, which before dinner are capable of engaging in the acuteſt and ſublimeſt diſquiſitions, are found, by general experience, to be comparatively dull and ſtupid after it. "I know not how it is," ſaid a celebrated writer, "but all my philoſophy, in which I was "ſo warmly engaged in the morning, appears like non-"ſenſe as ſoon as I have dined."

Very hot weather is particularly unfavourable to reading. The months of July, Auguſt, and September, are by no means the ſeaſons in which the fruits of the mind arrive at maturity. A rigid philoſopher will perhaps maintain, that the mental faculties are not to be affected by the viciſſitudes of cold and heat; but who will liſten to philoſophy, who is already convinced by actual experience? It is indeed remarkable, that theſe months are ſelected for vacation in the houſes of legiſlature, in the courts of law, and in the ſeats of learning. In cold and inclement weather, when we are driven to the fire-ſide for comfort, we find that delight in our books, which, in the vernal and autumnal ſeaſon, we ſought in the ſunſhine, and in the ſweets of rural ſcenery. We no longer roam, we collect our ſcattered ideas, and find, in the exerciſe of our faculties, that delight, which is the conſequence and reward of exerting, in a proper method, the natural energies of the divine particle which breathes within us.

But at all hours, and in all ſeaſons, if we can reſtrain the licentious rovings of the fancy, ſooth the paſſions of the heart, and command our attention, ſo

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as to concentre it on the ſubject we examine, we ſhall be ſure to find our attention amply rewarded. Attend cloſely, and cloſe attention to almoſt any worthy object will always produce ſolid ſatisfaction. Particularly in reading, it may be depended upon as an approved truth, that the degree of profit, as well as pleaſure, will ever be proportioned to the degree of attention.

No. LXXXIII. ON THE PROPRIETY OF ADORNING LIFE, AND SERVING SOCIETY, BY LAUDABLE EXERTION.

IN an age of opulence and luxury, when the native powers of the mind are weakened by vice, and habits of indolence are ſuperinduced by univerſal indulgence, the moraliſt can ſeldom expect to ſee examples of that unwearied perſeverance, of that generous exertion, which has ſometimes appeared in the world, and has been called heroic virtue. Indeed, it muſt be allowed, that in the early periods of ſociety there is greater occaſion, as well as greater ſcope, for this exalted ſpecies of public ſpirit, than when all its real wants are ſupplied, and all its ſecurities eſtabliſhed.

Under theſe diſadvantages there is, indeed, little opportunity for that uncommon heroiſm, which leads an individual to deſert his ſphere, and to act in contradiction to the maxims of perſonal intereſt and ſafety, with a view to reform the manners, or to promote the honour and advantage of the community. Patriotiſm, as it was underſtood and practiſed by a Brutus, a Curtius, a Scævola, or a Socrates, appears in modern times ſo eccentric a virtue, and ſo abhorrent from the dictates of common ſenſe, that he who ſhould imitate it would draw upon himſelf the ridicule of mankind, and would be eſteemed a madman. Moral and political knight errantry would now appear in ſcarcely a leſs ludicrous light than the extravagancies of chivalry.

But to do good in an effectual and extenſive manner within the limits of profeſſional influence, and by performing

forming the buſineſs of a ſtation, whatever it may be, not only with regular fidelity, but with warm and active diligence, is in the power, as it is the duty, of every individual who poſſeſſes the uſe of his faculties. It is ſurely an unſatisfactory idea, to live and die without purſuing any other purpoſe than the low one of perſonal gratification. A thouſand pleaſures and advantages we have received from the diſintereſted efforts of thoſe who have gone before us, and it is incumbent on every generation to do ſomething for the benefit of contemporaries and of thoſe who are to follow.

To be born, as Horace ſays, merely to conſume the fruits of the earth; to live, as Juvenal obſerves of ſome of his countrymen, with no other purpoſe than to gratify the palate, though they may in reality be the ſole ends of many, are yet too inglorious and diſgraceful to be avowed by the baſeſt of mankind.

There is little doubt, but that many, whoſe lives have glided away in an uſeleſs tenor, would have been glad of opportunities, if they could have diſcovered them, for laudable exertion. It is certainly true, that to qualify for political, military, literary, and patriotic efforts, peculiar preparations, accompliſhments, occaſions, and fortuitous contingencies are neceſſary. Civil wiſdom without civil employment, valour without an enemy, learning without opportunities for its diſplay, the love of our country without power, muſt terminate in abortive wiſhes, in deſigns unſupported by execution. They who form great ſchemes, and perform great exploits, muſt neceſſarily be few. But the exertions which benevolence points out, are extended to a great compaſs, are infinitely varied in kind and degree, and conſequently adapted, in ſome mode or other, to the ability of every individual.

To the diſtinguiſhed honour of our times and of our country, it muſt be aſſerted, that there is no ſpecies of diſtreſs which is not relieved; no laudable inſtitution which is not encouraged with an emulative ardour of liberality. No ſooner is a proper object of beneficence preſented to the public view, than ſubſcriptions are raiſed by all ranks, who crowd with impatience to the contribution. Not only the infirmities of age and ſickneſs

neſs are ſoothed by the beſt concerted eſtabliſhments, and the loſs ſuſtained by the calamities of a conflagration repaired; but our enemies, when reduced to a ſtate of captivity, are furniſhed with every comfort which their condition can admit, and all the malignity of party-hatred melts into kindneſs under the operation of charity. From the accumulated efforts of a community of philanthropiſts, ſuch as our nation may be called, a ſum of good is produced, far greater than any recorded of the heroes of antiquity, from Bacchus down to Cæſar.

It has been ſaid, that the ages of extraordinary bounty are paſſed. No colleges are founded in the preſent times, it is true; yet not becauſe there is no public ſpirit remaining, but becauſe there is already a ſufficient number raiſed by the pious hands of our forefathers, to anſwer all the purpoſes of academical improvement. When a want is ſupplied, it is not parſimony, but prudence, which withholds additional munificence. The infirmaries diffuſed over every part of the kingdom, are moſt honourable teſtimonies of that virtue which is to cover a multitude of ſins. And there is one inſtance of beneficence uncommon both in its degree and circumſtances, which, though done without a view to human praiſe, muſt not loſe even the ſubordinate reward of human virtue. He who lately devoted, during his life, a noble fortune to the relief of the blind, will be placed higher in the eſteem of poſterity, than the numerous train of poſthumous benefactors, who gave what they could no longer retain, and ſometimes from motives repreſented by the cenſorious as little laudable. While angels record the name of Hetherington in the book of life, let men inſcribe it in the rolls of fame.

The motive of praiſe, though by no means the beſt, is a generous and a powerful motive of commendable conduct. He would do an injury to mankind who ſhould ſtifle the love of fame. It has burnt with ſtrong and ſteady heat in the boſoms of the moſt ingenuous. It has inſpired enthuſiaſm in the cauſe of all that is good and great. Where patience muſt have failed, and perſeverance been wearied, it has urged through troubles

troubles deemed intolerable, and ſtimulated through difficulties dreaded as inſurmountable. Pain, penury, danger, and death, have been incurred with alacrity in the ſervice of mankind, with the expectation of no other recompence than an honourable diſtinction. And let not the frigidity of philoſophical rigour damp this noble ardour, which raiſes delightful ſenſations in the heart that harbours it, and gives riſe to all that is ſublime in life and in the arts. When we are ſo far refined and ſubdued as to act merely from the ſlow ſuggeſtions of the reaſoning faculty, we ſhall indeed ſeldom be involved in error; but we ſhall as ſeldom atchieve any glorious enterpriſe, or ſnatch a virtue beyond the reach of prudence.

The ſpirit of adventure in literary undertakings, as well as in politics, commerce, and war, muſt not be diſcouraged. If it produces that which is worth little notice, neglect is eaſy. There is a great probability, however, that it will often exhibit ſomething conducive to pleaſure and improvement. But when every new attempt is checked by ſeverity, or neglected without examination, learning ſtagnates, and the mind is depreſſed, till its productions ſo far degenerate as to juſtify diſregard. Taſte and literature are never long ſtationary. When they ceaſe to advance, they become retrograde.

Every liberal attempt to give a liberal entertainment is entitled to a kind excuſe, though its execution ſhould not have a claim to praiſe. For the ſake of encouraging ſubſequent endeavours, lenity ſhould be diſplayed where there is no appearance of incorrigible ſtupidity, of aſſuming ignorance, and of empty ſelf-conceit. Severity chills the opening powers, as the froſt nips the bud that would elſe have been a bloſſom. It is blameable moroſeneſs to cenſure thoſe who ſincerely mean to pleaſe, and fail only from cauſes not in their own diſpoſal.

The praiſe, however, of well meaning has uſually been allowed with a facility of conceſſion, which leads to ſuſpect that it was thought of little value. It has alſo been received with apparent mortification. This

ſurely is the reſult of a perverted judgment; for intention is in the power of every man, though no man can command ability.

No. LXXXIV. ON PHILOSOPHICAL CRITICISM, AND ON THE LITTLE ASSISTANCE IT GIVES TO GENIUS.

ARISTOTLE was the firſt of thoſe writers who endeavoured to render taſte ſubject to philoſophy. His poetics are almoſt the only parts of his works which continue to be eſteemed with a degree of implicit veneration. Mutilated and imperfect as they have come down to us, they yet contain many ſentences pregnant with matter, and which lead the mind into the moſt curious theory. Yet it is certain, that they never yet formed a ſingle poet, nor aſſiſted him in any other reſpect than in the mechanical contrivance of a plan; a defect in which is eaſily forgiven, when it is ſupplied by the native charms of real genius. Of this our Shakeſpeare is a proof, who, with all his ignorance of critical refinement, wrote in ſuch a manner, as not only to be preferred by thoſe who idoliſe him through prejudice, but by the moſt impartial readers, to Æſchylus, Sophocles, and Euripides.

Though the old ſcholaſtic metaphyſics were ſcarcely ever more exploded than in the preſent times, yet there is a taſte for metaphyſical criticiſm particularly prevalent among our thoughtful neighbours in North Britain. The author of the Elements of Criticiſm has penetrated deeply to diſcern the cauſe of thoſe emotions, which literary compoſitions are found to produce. He has diſplayed great taſte, great elegance, great reading, and a ſubtilty of enquiry, which muſt have reſulted from unwearied labour, and from a ſingular ſhare of natural ſagacity. But I believe no reader ever found himſelf better able to compoſe, after having peruſed his volumes, than before he ſaw them. Nor

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is it ſaid, that their author, with all his theoretical knowledge of poetry, is himſelf a poet or an orator. This is not advanced to detract from his merit; for it is true of Ariſtotle, and of all thoſe writers who, with a genius for logic and metaphyſics, have entered on the provinces of taſte and criticiſm. Dr. Campbell's Philoſophy of Rhetoric is a book of uncommon merit; it is read with great pleaſure and improvement; yet it will be readily owned, that it tends little to form the orator. The author of the Origin and Progreſs of Language has diſplayed, as Harris ſays, "many ju-"dicious and curious remarks on ſtyle, compoſition, "language, particularly the Engliſh; obſervations of "the laſt conſequence to thoſe who wiſh either to write "or judge with accuracy and elegance." This is certainly true; and yet many have written, and many will write, with accuracy and elegance, without even hearing of this excellent treatiſe.

Moſt of the books which the world has agreed to admire, were compoſed previouſly to the appearance of ſyſtematical and abſtruſe theories of criticiſm, or by authors who, it is well known, paid them no attention. Homer, who is ſtill the beſt heathen author in the world, had neither archetype nor inſtructor. Had his mind been called off from the book of nature, to ſuch ſpeculations as the Stagyrite afterwards fabricated from his noble inventions, there is great reaſon to believe, that the Iliad and Odyſſey had long ago gone whither all the coldly correct productions are daily haſtening. Theocritus would probably have written with much leſs eaſe and ſimplicity, had he read all that critical ingenuity has advanced on paſtoral poetry. The Orations of Demoſthenes, however elaborate, were not formed on the models of profeſſed rhetoricians. No Boſſu had written when Virgil produced his magnificent work. No treatiſes on the ſublime and beautiful had appeared, when Milton poured his majeſtic ſong. Nature, glowing nature, ſuggeſted the exquiſitely fine ideas as they flowed, and left laborious criticiſm to weary herſelf in forming rules and ſyſtems from the unſtudied efforts of her happier temerity.

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It must not, however, be immediately concluded, that these books, which display great ingenuity, are useless, and the result of ill-employed time and talents. They constitute a most elegant species of philosophy. They lead to a knowledge of the human heart, and the operation of the passions. They require genius of a peculiar kind, the subtile and penetrating, and they please readers who are possessed of a corresponding taste. The point which we wish to evince is, that the lover of poetry, of oratory, of all the objects of classical taste, who means to exercise himself in the composition of them, will find himself mistaken in his plan of study, if he reads such writers as a preparatory discipline. Original authors must at first engross his attention; and from these, if he is possessed of abilities, he will insensibly catch a portion of fire, with which he will invigorate his own compositions; and in consequence of which he will be read with pleasure, though he should not have studied one metaphysical critic from Aristotle to the latest modern.

To learn in what this noble distinction of genius consists, has been the subject of enquiry. Little success has hitherto attended it; for the mind, as it has been often said, like the eye, though it calls up all nature to its view, cannot procure a sight of itself. With great probability, it has been supposed, that genius is an extraordinary power of attention; a capacity in the mind of attaching itself closely and strongly, at a glance, to every object that solicits its regard; of taking in the whole of it in all its distant relations, dependencies, modifications, origin, and consequences. But if we allow an extraordinary power of attention to be genius, which perhaps cannot be allowed, the question recurs, by what means this attention is caused and secured? Thus far the name is only changed, and the subject is still involved in difficulty.

It is too obviously true to be controverted, that there is an essential difference in the organization of different men; not merely in the external form, but in the interior structure of the invisible springs, which regulate

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all the animal tendencies and motions. It is highly probable, that a delicate ſyſtem of nerves, or a firmer contexture of them, is better able to obſerve the external world with unerring accuracy, than a more callous or a more relaxed aſſemblage of theſe inſtruments of ſenſation. This favourable prediſpoſition of the organs, followed by peculiar opportunities for collecting ideas, and by inducements to impart them to the world, may perhaps conſtitute what we call literary genius.

There is indeed little doubt, but that ſome kind of genius, or, in other words, ſome peculiar ability to receive a certain train of ideas neceſſary to the practice of ſome art, or to the purſuit of ſome profeſſion, is poſſeſſed by every individual not in a ſtate of idiotiſm. Nature, a kind parent to all her children, has uſually endowed them all with a power of exerting themſelves with ſkill and advantage in ſome way or other. The misfortune has been, that the indications of nature are not always ſufficiently manifeſt to the conductors of education. The deſtination is often neceſſarily fixed, before the faculties are arrived at ſufficient ſtrength to point out their propenſity.

Univerſal genius is indeed ſparingly, perhaps never, beſtowed. For the preſervation of impartiality, where nature has allowed an excellence in any remarkable degree, ſhe has often permitted a defect to counterbalance it. Yet in the literary annals of almoſt every nation, we find many diſtinguiſhed by intellectual endowments above the ordinary condition of humanity. It is a noble privilege to excel men in the very perfection by which they ſurpaſs the irrational animals, and is doubtleſs permitted by Providence for the happineſs of mankind. Let it be conſidered, as an inſtance of the advantage which mankind derives from ſingular genius, what a train of light has been diffuſed far and wide on thouſands and tens of thouſands, for the ſpace of near twenty hundred years, from the illumined underſtanding of the individual Cicero. Or, to take an example from our own poliſhed age and country, let a conjecture be formed of the number of thoſe who have been led to every thing good and great by an Addiſon.

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The world, however, has ſeldom been grateful to its benefactors. It has neglected, baniſhed, poiſoned, and crucified them. But there was an inward ſatisfaction in conſcious rectitude, a generous ſpirit in heroic virtue, which bore them through every thing with comfort, and their merit increaſed and triumphed in adverſity.

They who have been poſſeſſed of ſubordinate degrees of genius, have in later times been induced to affect a ſingularity of ſentiment and practice, in order to draw upon themſelves the eyes of mankind. In purſuit of this end, they have adopted vices which their hearts and underſtanding muſt have condemned. Eccentricity has been the object of their wiſhes. Ruin and diſgrace have been the uſual conſequences, and the admiration of others has at laſt been extinguiſhed in compaſſion. Poor man! it has been often exclaimed, he was indeed clever, but he wanted conduct, and he unfortunately died in a gaol.

If moral could be combined with mental excellence; if the native vigour of genius could ſubmit to be guided and reſtrained by the deciſions of well-conducted art; then might be ſupplied, what none will venture to expect, the two grand deſiderata in morals and literature, a perfect man and a perfect work.

No. LXXXV. ON THE IMPORTANCE OF A GOOD CHARACTER, CONSIDERED ONLY WITH RESPECT TO INTEREST.

AS the minds of men are infinitely various, and as they are therefore influenced in the choice of a conduct by different inducements, the moraliſt muſt omit no motive, however ſubordinate in its nature, while it appears likely to lead ſome among mankind to a laudable, or even a blameleſs behaviour. A regard to eaſe, to intereſt, and to ſucceſs, in the uſual purſuits of wealth and ambition, may induce many to purſue an honeſt and honourable conduct, who would not have been influenced by purer motives: but after they have once perceived

perceived the intrinsic excellence and beauty of such a conduct, they will probably persevere in it for its own sake, and upon higher considerations.

To those who are to make their own way either to wealth or honours, a good character is usually no less necessary than address and abilities. Though human nature is degenerate, and corrupts itself still more by its own inventions; yet it usually retains an esteem for excellence. But even if we are arrived at such an extreme degree of depravity as to have lost our native reverence for virtue; yet a regard to our own interest and safety, which we seldom lose, will lead us to apply, in all important transactions, to men whose integrity is unimpeached. When we chuse an assistant, a partner, a servant, our first enquiry is concerning his character. When we have occasion for a counsellor or attorney, a physician or apothecary, whatever we may be ourselves, we always chuse to trust our property and persons to men of character. When we fix on the tradesmen who are to supply us with necessaries, we are not determined by the sign of the lamb, or the wolf, or the fox; nor by a shop fitted up in the most elegant taste, but by the fairest reputation. Look into a daily newspaper, and you will see how important the characters of the employed appear to the employers, from the highest to the lowest rank. After the advertisement has enumerated the qualities required in the person wanted, there constantly follows, that none need apply who cannot bring an undeniable character. Offer yourself as a candidate for a seat in parliament, be promoted to honour and emolument, or in any respect attract the attention of mankind upon yourself, and if you are vulnerable in your character, you will be deeply wounded. This is a general testimony in favour of honesty, which no writings and no practices can refute.

Young men, therefore, whose characters are yet unfixed, and who, consequently, may render them just such as they wish, ought to pay great attention to the first steps which they take on entrance into life. They are usually careless and inattentive to this object. They pursue their own plans with ardour, and neglect the opinions which others entertain of them. By some thoughtless

thoughtleſs action or expreſſion, they ſuffer a mark to be impreſſed upon them, which ſcarcely any ſubſequent merit can entirely eraſe. Every man will find ſome perſons, who, if they are not enemies, view him with an envious or a jealous eye; and who will gladly revive any tale to which truth has given the ſlighteſt foundation.

Indeed all men are ſo much inclined to flatter their own pride, by detracting from the reputation of others, that ſuppoſing we were able to maintain an immaculate conduct, it would ſtill be difficult to preſerve an immaculate character. But yet it is wiſdom not to furniſh this detracting ſpirit with real ſubjects for the exerciſe of its activity. While calumny is ſupported only by imagination, or by malice, we may ſometimes remove, by contradicting it; but wherever folly or vice have ſupplied facts, we can ſeldom do more than aggravate the evil, by giving it an apparent attention. The malignity of ſome among the various diſpoſitions of which mankind are compoſed, is often highly gratified at the view of injured ſenſibility.

In this turbulent and confuſed ſcene, where our words and actions are often miſunderſtood, and oftener miſrepreſented, it is indeed difficult even for innocence and integrity to avoid reproach, abuſe, contempt and hatred. Theſe not only hurt our intereſt and impede our advancement in life, but ſorely afflict the feelings of a tender and delicate mind. It is then the part of wiſdom firſt to do every thing in our power to preſerve an irreproachable character, and then to let our happineſs depend chiefly on the approbation of our own conſciences, and on the advancement of our intereſt in a world where liars ſhall not be believed, and where ſlanderers ſhall receive countenance from none but him who, in Greek, is called, by way of eminence, Diabolus, or the Calumniator.

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No. LXXXVI. ON THE OSTENTATIOUS AFFECTATION OF THE CHARACTER OF A LEARNED LADY, WITHOUT SUFFICIENT LEARNING, AND WITHOUT JUDGMENT.

THE moſt attractive beauty of the perſon reſults from the graces of the mind. Delicacy, ſweetneſs, ſenſe, and ſenſibility, ſhining in the eyes, will compenſate an irregularity of features, and will ſooner excite love in a feeling heart, than the beſt formed face and the fineſt complexional hue without expreſſion.

Nature muſt indeed have laid the foundation of theſe amiable qualities in the diſpoſition; but they are by no methods ſo effectually called forth and improved, as by the cultivation of a literary taſte. In an intercourſe with the world, we ſee and feel the diſagreeable paſſions; ſuch as have an effect in diſtorting the countenance, and in giving to the eyes an envious, a proud, a diſdainful, or an artful aſpect; than which nothing is more repugnant to the idea of allurement. Eyes that unfortunately have acquired any of theſe appearances, whatever beauties they may be ſurrounded with, poſſeſs a repellent power, and operate like the baſiliſk. But however wicked the world is, books are for the moſt part ſtill virtuous. Human nature appears in them in its moſt pleaſing colours. They inſpire generous and tender ſentiments. She who is judiciouſly converſant with them, will find her countenance improving as her mind is informed, and her look ennobled as her heart is elevated. This muſt be a powerful motive for application among the ladies; and they may reſt aſſured, that perſonal and mental beauty, though, when ſeparate, their dominion is not abſolute, are truly irreſiſtible when combined.

An application to books, however, is often found not to produce any attractive effects; nor is it to be wondered at, when it is conducted in an injudicious and deſultory

desultory manner. The advice of friends is at first necessary to point out the kind of books, and the times, the modes, and the degrees of study. Superficial and ill-directed reading tends to inspire the most odious of all vanity, and to occasion a behaviour truly ridiculous.

Sempronia has studied all the Magazines for these ten years past, and has now and then obtained the honour of contributing a little piece to some of her admired miscellanies. This distinction, as she thinks it, has greatly elevated her in her own opinion. She deems it sufficient to emancipate her from the usual decorums of external forms. She talks with an overbearing confidence, which, if she were not excused because she is a professed wit, would be intolerable rudeness. Her attention to the muses has excluded the graces from any share of her notice. If you call upon her in the morning, you find her with slipshod shoes, no apron, matted hair, a dirty face, a cap awry, and fingers begrimed with ink. If you ask her in what she is exercising her genius, she informs you she is writing a Pindaric ode on spring, and is looking in Byshe's Art of Poetry for a rhyme to trees. It must be sent immediately, she says, or it will not be inserted this month. She hopes, therefore, that she may be excused in declining company. Her visitor has reason to rejoice at the dismission; for the sight of her, as Swift less delicately says of Cælia, will operate as an emetic, and the smell as a poison.

Corinna happened to fall upon some of the works of our modern sceptics. She could not understand them perfectly; but she discovered enough to be assured that scepticism was supposed to be a mark of superior sense, of a freedom from those narrow prejudices which enthral the vulgar mind. She cannot therefore talk on common affairs; but when she gets into company with enlightened people, she expatiates on the happiness of possessing a philosophical turn, and pities the poor narrow souls who go to church and perform all their duties, as they call them, with mechanical regularity, just like their great grandmothers. Voltaire, Rousseau, Bolingbroke, and Hume, are her oracles. She is dreaded by her own sex, and indeed voluntarily gives up their society. But

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the men ſhe thinks more entertaining, more converſible, and leſs ſhackled with prejudices. She imagines herſelf particularly attended to by them; and indeed there are ſome humouriſts who liſten to her converſation, in order to lay up ſtore for ridicule. All who are judges, condemn and diſlike her for entering into ſtudies which have a natural tendency to darken the underſtanding and to corrupt the heart, and which are peculiarly odious in thoſe who were formed to increaſe the comforts of life, and not to cut them off by diffuſing the gloomy notions of the ſceptic.

It was the misfortune of Fulvia to live next door to a circulating library. In every moment of liſtleſſneſs the maid was diſpatched for a handful of novels, no matter by whom they were written, or what they were in themſelves, provided they were ſentimental. By an uninterrupted courſe of ſuch reading, ſhe had acquired a taſte for anecdotes, private hiſtory, and all that relates to the effects of love, which, ſhe was led to think, formed the great buſineſs of human life. Her heart had been a thouſand times melted, and pierced, and ſmitten, and wounded, and was at laſt ſo mollified, that ſhe felt the tendereſt ſentiments for every man with little diſtinction. She could not paſs a few moments in a private interview with a male acquaintance, without being conſcious of tender ſentiments for him. She often doubted whether ſhe ought, upon the whole, to rejoice or lament that ſhe was endowed with ſuch extreme ſenſibility. But to be ſure, ſo it was, her poor heart was ſo full of love, that every one who approached might have a ſhare unaſked. Her voice was faint and tremulous; her refinements were elegant to a degree inconceivable. She was hardly fit for this low orb. She was always miſerable, except when pouring out her ſentiments in letters to ſome beloved Eudoxus. She was, in ſhort, too tender, too ſuſceptible, too pure, too elevated, to live in this world; and ſo every body ſaid, till, in evil hour, ſhe ran away with a corporal quartered in the town, and has never been heard of ſince.

Leſbia, when very young, wrote a few rhymes, which, as her age was conſidered, were much applauded by her friends. Fluſhed with praiſe, ſhe conſidered herſelf as a ſecond

a second Sappho, and has ever since been devoted to the muse. Her reading was chiefly confined to the poet's corner in newspapers, and her productions have rivalled her models. She composes ænigmas, acrostics, rebuffes, and songs, for those little red pocket-books which are annually published for the ladies, and she has had the honour of gaining the reward for expounding the Prize Riddle. Within the circle of her acquaintance she is much admired. If a wedding happens among any of them, she pays for her bride-cake with an epithalamium; and she keeps in her drawers, like haberdashers wares in a shop, odes, elegies, and epigrams, adapted to every occasion.

Of all subjects, politics seem the least adapted to the female character. Women are entirely excluded from legislative influence; and, it is well known, that public affairs are seldom treated with temper, either in writing or conversation. But the female politician is by no means uncommon. Cornelia derives all her learning, of which she thinks she possesses an ample share, from the miscellaneous volumes of a Say and a Woodfall. She has herself sometimes ventured to communicate a paragraph or two, and has been delighted, even to rapture, with the thought, that a plan or conjecture of hers has been wafted throughout the empire by so rapid a conveyance. On common subjects she is mild and reasonable; but while the gentlemen are talking politics, she submits with great reluctance to the rule of decorum, which requires that she should pay attention to the ladies. Her colour comes and goes for a long time, till at last she can bear it no longer, and bursts out with a blaze of eloquence, scarcely rivalled in the most famous schools of oratory, those of Athens or of Billingsgate. A treaty of marriage was on foot some time ago; but after the preliminaries were all settled, and a day for the ratification of the articles fixed, a rupture ensued on the adjustment of the balance of power, and hostilities have not yet ceased, nor is a coalition of the parties likely to take place.

In these few instances, and in those many which observation of the world will supply, there seems to have been an original fund of parts, and a love of books, which,

which, properly directed, would have led to great improvements. But vague industry and unguided emulation, ſtimulated to perſiſt in a wrong path by the partial praiſes of friends and relations, have precipitated even the amiably diſpoſed into unſupported vanity, and cauſed them to diſtinguiſh themſelves without acquiring honour.

To be affected in any way is, at all times, in all places, and in all degrees, to be diſagreeable. But affectation of learning, in a woman with very little merit, draws upon itſelf the contempt and hatred of both ſexes. They who excel moſt in either ſex, are found by experience to be moſt candid and modeſt; to aſſume leaſt, and to join in converſation with others, without diſplaying the ſenſe of their ſuperiority. Indeed it often happens, that there is an amiable humility in true genius and learning, which compels the poſſeſſor of them to think diffidently of his own character, amid the united praiſes of all around. Let her then, who poſſeſſes the bright jewel of learning, take care to ſet it in a plain manner, and its luſtre will become more conſpicuous.

In the embelliſhment of the perſon, a ſufficient degree of care is uſually taken that nothing unbecoming ſhall have a place in it. A regard is commonly paid to age, rank, and every circumſtance which can point out the line of propriety. But in adorning the mind, it is uſual to attend to little elſe but the dictates of inclination. Yet there is certainly a kind of ſexual difference in the minds of the ſexes, which admits and requires a different ſpecies of intellectual accompliſhment. Oeconomy is ſaid, indeed, to be the peculiar province of women; yet, ſurely, as rational beings, their reaſon may properly receive the higheſt poſſible cultivation. Nor ſhould their attainments occaſion contempt or neglect, unleſs they are ſullied by obtruding arrogance, by a maſculine boldneſs, a critical ſeverity, and an ill-timed and injudicious oſtentation.

No. LXXXVII. ON THE FOLLY AND WICKEDNESS OF NEGLECTING A FAMILY AND CHILDREN, FOR THE PLEASURES OF DISSIPATION.

THOUGH it may be true, as it has been aſſerted, that one age is not better than another, yet it is obvious to remark that the modes, if not the degrees, of vice, have varied at different periods; and that, of modes equally criminal in themſelves, ſome are particularly deſtructive. Whatever have been the manners of preceding times, in our own country, I believe it will be readily allowed, that the middle ranks were never univerſally infected with the love of a diſſipating life, till the preſent age. Domeſtic induſtry and œconomy, or the qualities diſtinguiſhed by the homely titles of thriftineſs and good houſewifery, were always, till the preſent century, deemed honourable. They are now, however, diſcarded in diſgrace; and in their place have ſucceeded a paſſionate love of ſhow without ſubſtance, a never-ceaſing attention to dreſs, and an inſatiable hunger and thirſt after diverſions public and private.

Whoever conſiders the natural effect of exceſſive indulgence, in relaxing and weakening the tone of the mind, will immediately perceive how pernicious it muſt be to human nature in general, and to each particular ſociety. There can remain neither inclination, nor ability for exertion, when the ſtrings which ſhould give elaſticity are looſe or broken; and without exertion what is man? Behold what he is in the womaniſh court of an oriental tyrant. Sunk in ſloth, and proſtrate in meanneſs, poor human nature, in ſuch a ſituation, ſcarcely equals, in ſpirit or ingenuity, the monkey and baboon.

But I mean not to enlarge on diſſipation in general, but to conſider its effects in the limited circle of private families;

families; from which, however, it gradually extends its influence, like the undulations of a pebble thrown into a pool, over the whole community throughout all its departments.

Let us ſuppoſe a married couple in the middle ranks of life (and I ſelect my inſtances from the middle ranks becauſe they are the moſt numerous and important). Let us ſuppoſe them juſt ſetting out, as it is called, in the world. The firſt object is to form and extend connexions. The oſtenſible motive is the advancement of the family intereſt; the real and moſt powerful motive, the love of various company, in a continual ſucceſſion. Dinners and ſuppers, dancing and card-playing, leave little time, and no inclination, for the ſober buſineſs of the trade or profeſſion. A neglected trade or profeſſion cannot ſucceed; and the poor young people, after having ſpent the little and hard-earned patrimony which, it may be, their affectionate parents beſtowed on them, live the reſt of their lives in ſome poor lodging in penury or ſervitude, or die of diſappointment.

But if, by uncommonly good fortune, they avoid bankruptcy or ruin, yet their love of diſſipation never fails to poiſon that happineſs which it pretends to ſweeten. It prevents them from performing the moſt indiſpenſable duties, and living the life of rational creatures. All heads of families are preſidents of little ſocieties, which they are bound to regulate by precept and example. But how ſhall they be qualified to do this, who are ſeldom at home, and who, when they are there, are conſtantly engaged in vanity? Their own corruption deſcends, with additional malignity of influence, to the loweſt menial, who has ſought protection beneath their roof.

But let us conſider them in the relation of parents. Nothing can be more inconſiſtent with the life of a lady, who delights in the faſhionable amuſements, than the care of her new-born child. Her dreſs would be diſconcerted, and her ſhape ſpoiled, were ſhe to attempt to feed it herſelf with the food which nature has made convenient for it. She could not be abſent from home. She muſt be liable to interruption at all hours. Her health alſo muſt fail under ſo conſtant a fatigue, added

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to the neceſſary toils of the ball and card table. Her phyſician, for ſhe takes care to keep the doctor on her ſide, declares, that from the delicate imbecility of her conſtitution, it would be highly improper for her to ſubmit to the exhauſting taſk of ſuckling an infant. The little one, therefore, whoſe heavenly ſmiles would repay every maternal care, is ſent to the cottage, or the garret, of ſome hireling nurſe. There, amidſt poverty, hunger, and naſtineſs, it drags a precarious exiſtence, with no attention, but the cold charity of a mercenary woman, who has often, at the ſame time, a child of her own to engroſs her maternal endearments. The mother, in the mean time, is engaged in the gay circle of an aſſembly, loſing that money at cards, or ſpending it in dreſs and pleaſures, which ought to pay her huſband's creditors! Ah! little thinks ſhe how her poor infant, which ought to be foſtered in her boſom, is bewailing, in the expreſſive language of tears, the neglect, and the harſh treatment it undergoes, in the dreary haunts of want and miſery. Many a ſevere menace, and many a hard blow, does the ſweet babe receive from the paſſionate and ignorant nurſe, at which a mother's heart would bleed, if it were not loſt to ſenſibility. Poor innocents, unhappy orphans, deſerted in your helpleſs ſtate, by thoſe who have brought you into a wretched world; may he who took the children up in his arms, put his hands on them, and bleſſed them, have pity on your woes—on thoſe injuries which ye ſorely ſuffer, but cannot have deſerved.

Life, however, is not eaſily extinguiſhed; and notwithſtanding all the pains and inconveniences which the child undergoes from want of food, from want of cleanlineſs, from want of thoſe tender attentions which a mother only can pay, it does indeed ſurvive; but what remains of its lot is even more miſerable than that which has already paſſed. As it has always been abſent from home, it is a ſtranger there. Its parents feel but little natural affection for it; for natural affection fixes itſelf in the heart moſt deeply at that period when the infant is hanging at the breaſt, and ſmiling, as it were, with gratitude, in the face of her who ſupplies it with delicious nouriſhment from her own vital current. It

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takes ſtill firmer poſſeſſion of the heart when the child begins to prattle, and to play thoſe little tricks which none but a callous mind can behold without delight. But, alas! the little boy or girl are ſtill conſidered as obſtacles to pleaſure at home. They pay a ſhort and formal viſit there, and are again diſmiſſed to a nurſe, locked up with ſervants in the garret, or transferred to their grandmother. The laſt is a moſt enviable lot, in compariſon with the former; in which they not only experience harſh words and hard blows, but learn vulgar ideas, vulgar language and habits of every kind, which muſt one day be unlearned.

As ſoon as they can walk firmly, and talk plainly, they are removed to one of thoſe convenient ſchools or academies, as they are called, where children, at a very early age, are received as into nurſeries. In the ſubſequent courſe of their education they are conſtantly kept from home; or if they are indulged in a viſit of a few days, they ſee nothing but what tends to miſlead them. They receive no fatherly advice, and whatever learning they may acquire at their ſchools, they uſually enter on the ſtage to act their part in the drama of life, without judgment, and without principles to regulate their conduct. There is uſually added to their misfortune of being neglected and miſled, that of being deprived all ſhare of their parent's poſſeſſions; who, in the gay circles of pleaſure, not only ſpend their own, but involve themſelves and their eſtates in debt, and in every ſpecies of diſtreſſing and diſgraceful embarraſſment. There is no part of the family and affairs of the diſſipated which has not a tendency to ruin. They are themſelves in a conſtant ſtate of mortification and diſappointment. Their object in purſuing a perpetual round of amuſements, is to obtain perpetual pleaſure; an object which human nature could never yet accompliſh. They, of all others, are leaſt likely to obtain it who make pleaſure a buſineſs, and, in proſecution of it, neglect their moſt important and their daily duties. Indeed, there is nothing more miſapprehended than the nature of pleaſure. Men are deluded by a name, and, catching at a phantom, loſe reality. The trueſt plea-

ſure reſults from calm and moderate emotions. Noiſe, tumult, violence, diſorder, take off the fine ſpirit from that which is otherwiſe formed to pleaſe, and leave little behind but dregs or diſagreeable ingredients. Balls, aſſemblies, feaſts, public diverſions, cards, dreſs, various company, ſhould be purſued only as what they are, temporary amuſements. Aſk thoſe who are whirled in the vortex of faſhion, whether they are happy, notwithſtanding they are engaged, without ceaſing, in what the world calls pleaſure; they are as ready to complain of languor and of miſery as any other part of mankind. Pride and vanity compel them to move with others of their rank or fortune; but their countenances and words abundantly teſtify that they have, at leaſt, their ſhare of human uneaſineſs. They feel, indeed, the ſatisfaction of being diſtinguiſhed from the poor, becauſe their fortunes enable them to pay for the diſtinction; but that happineſs is but ſlenderly ſupported, which is founded only on the gratification of a weak and womaniſh vanity.

With reſpect to that particular part of the evil reſulting from diſſipation, the neglect and conſequent miſery of families, it is, certainly, very extenſive and important. Single men, and ſingle women, however led aſtray by the falſe lights of their own vain imagination, ſuffer by themſelves, or at leaſt draw but a few in their train. But the whole riſing generation muſt be endangered, when diſſipation is become univerſal among parents and the heads of families.

Selfiſh arguments may ſucceed when others fail; and I therefore wiſh I could convince the generality of a certain truth; that there is really more pleaſure to be found at the family fire-ſide, and in the regular performance of domeſtic duties, than in the never-ceaſing purſuit after faſhionable amuſements. What is the delight of ſeeing an Italian or French dancer ſtand upon one leg, compared to that of beholding one's own ſmiling babes in the raptures of a game at play? What is the delight of glittering at a ball, a play, a maſquerade, compared to that of a home, in which are found plenty, tranquillity, and love, uninterrupted by

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the extravagance, the folly, the pride, the reſtleſſneſs of that ignorant, empty, weak, and fickle, yet arbitrary tyrant, Faſhion?

Not that the moraliſt is ſevere. He prohibits no moderate and reaſonable enjoyments. He is too well acquainted with human nature, and with life, ſo to moralize. He maintains only, that though diſſipating pleaſures may be allowed as a temporary relief, they are fatal to happineſs and virtue, when they are ſuffered to engage the whole attention, or to become the chief employment.

No. LXXXVIII. ON FORMING CONNECTIONS.

ONE can never ſufficiently admire the liberal ſpirit of the great philoſopher and orator of Rome, who, in his fine treatiſe on friendſhip, has exploded the idea, that the proſpect of advantage is the foundation of this virtuous union, and aſſerted, that it owes its origin to a conviction in the parties of the mutual excellence of their morals and diſpoſition.

This generous opinion appears ſtill greater and more amiable when it is compared with the precepts and the practices of latter ages, and particularly of the preſent. It is now one of the firſt admonitions given to a young man, who is entering on the career of life, that he muſt, at all events, make connections. And inſtead of informing him, that he is to be directed in his choice of them by the appearance of moral and mental excellence, according to the ſublime ideas of the noble Roman, his ſagacious monitors ſuggeſt to him, that he is to be ſolely guided by the proſpect of his intereſt and advancement in the road of ambition. Let a poor man of approved character, learning, and genius, and a rich man of faſhion, with no pretenſions to either, be introduced to a ſenſible and prudent young man of the world; and, while the rich man is viewed with ſubmiſſion, complacence, and treated with almoſt idolatrous attention, the

poor man ſtands by unnoticed, and probably deſpiſed. On the ſlight acquaintance of a firſt introduction, the youth who is deeply verſed in worldly wiſdom, will not fail to call at the rich man's houſe, and leave a card with moſt reſpectful compliments; he would not come into the neighbourhood without paying that reſpect on any account whatever; he is not half ſo ſcrupulous about going to church and paying his court to his Maker; but at the very time while he is bowing at the threſhold of the rich man, the philoſopher ſhall paſs by, and, becauſe he poſſeſſes only a competency without ſuperfluity, and without influence, he ſhall not be honoured with the common civility of a ſalutation. For it is a maxim with theſe men, that as it is an honour to know and be known to perſons of fortune and title, ſo it is a diſgrace to acknowledge an acquaintance with thoſe who have nothing to recommend them but honour, ſpirit, learning, and virtue.

The formation of connections is conſidered as ſo important, that it becomes, in effect, the principal object in education. The boy, whoſe parents are profeſſed people of the world, would not, on any account, fail to place him at a ſchool to which the ſons of the nobility are often ſent, though they are ready to confeſs, that little learning and great profligacy are the uſual acquiſitions in it. If the boy has grown intimate with the ſon of a Duke, a Lord, or a Baronet, his parents are better pleaſed with him than if he had learned by heart all Horace, Virgil, and Homer. There is no ſubmiſſion ſo mean, and no attentions ſo ſervile, but he is ready to pay them with alacrity, in accompliſhing the important object of forming connections. The mind is rendered, by theſe means, low and abject; and though the boy may afterwards riſe to the honour of being a nobleman's chaplain, or his travelling companion, yet he will retain, through life, the ſentiments and ſpirit of his Lordſhip's footman or valet de chambre.

A man, unacquainted with the world, might ſuppoſe, that the readieſt road to preferment in ſeveral of the profeſſions, is to acquire the knowledge and accompliſhments which are neceſſary to a ſkilful practice of them. But this is really not the caſe. The ſureſt and moſt compendious

compendious method pointed out by the wise men of this world, is to form connections. Accordingly we see persons in the professions, who aim at distinction and advancement, by no means confining themselves to their libraries; but studying the graces of dress and address, and the arts of simulation and dissimulation. We see them frequenting all public places, giving and receiving invitation to dinners and suppers, and evidently spending so much time in dissipation, as to leave scarcely an hour in a day for reading and study.

We will suppose a young man entering on the profession of a physician. The time before he is of age is, perhaps, devoted to hearing fashionable lectures, and to reading a few superficial books; such as tend to acquaint him with the common and obvious modes of practice. But he no sooner steps into the world than both books and lectures are laid aside. Several years, indeed, must elapse before he takes his Doctor's degree. But this time is not spent in study only, by him who knows how to play his cards, as it is called, and to secure success in life. No; he has learned a wiser lesson, and is well assured, that the most familiar acquaintance with Galen and Hippocrates, will not advance him half so well as connections. Connections are, therefore, the first and the last study of the day. If he has been fortunate enough to procure an introduction to a few titled persons, and to prescribe, with success, in the case of some Duchess Dowager's pricked finger, his fortune is made; he cannot fail of being recommended to more connections in the same fashionable line. He himself will become the fashion, and people of fashion will wish to be ill, or pretend to be ill, that they may have the credit of calling Doctor such an one "our "physician." Connections will now be made, and money accumulated with such rapidity, that the Doctor will become a greater man than his employers, and venture to dictate to Lords and Dukes in politics, as well as in a purge. It is a well-known fact, and I mention it only as one instance, that some of the aspiring faculty had united the late Lord Chatham among their closest connections.

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In the ſubordinate branches alſo of the healing art, and indeed in moſt of the walks of life, much more dependence is placed on connections than on merit; much more attention paid to acquiring connections than in acquiring merit; and to deſerve connections is by no means thought the ſecureſt method of obtaining them. Deceit, external ſhow, and pompous pretences, are deemed infallible noſtrums for making connections; but, alas! can any lucrative advantage, reſulting from connections, repay a rational creature for ſacrificing truth and liberty? Theſe connections are dignified by the name of friendſhips. Shade of Cicero, what indignation muſt thou feel at ſuch preſumption!

In divinity too, I am ſorry to obſerve, that many more have riſen to eccleſiaſtical emolument and dignity by ſtudying, throughout their lives, to make connections, than by ſuperior piety or theological attainments. It is lamentable to behold thoſe whoſe minds ought to poſſeſs peculiar elevation, bowing and cringing, with abject ſervility, to the vileſt peer of the realm, who happens to have influence at court, or to be the patron of a living. The Lord ſhall be a profeſſed ſcoffer at all religion, and an avowed enemy to chriſtianity in particular, and yet ſhall have a tribe of clergymen at his levee, who cannot help admiring his wit and underſtanding. Preferment, indeed, ſeems to be the only object among many of thoſe, who are ſet apart to teach the world that the riches of divine grace are the trueſt riches, and crowns of glory in a better world, the moſt enviable mitres. Horace has ſaid, that to have pleaſed the great is not the loweſt praiſe; many of the modern inſtructors of mankind ſeem to conſider it as the higheſt; and, in proportion as they are ſervile to their patron, they are inſolent to their curate.

It is a maxim with many, founded, as they pretend, on real obſervation, that mitres, ſtalls, and pluralities, are not attainable by any ſuch qualities as are acquired in the ſtudy. You muſt form connections. In order to form connections, you muſt recommend yourſelf to various company by the graces; you muſt poſſeſs verſatility of mind; you muſt frequent aſſemblies, gaming-tables,

tables, watering places; your conſcience muſt be as eaſy as your manners; you muſt take care not to ſpend too much time in reading Greek, or any thing elſe but the Court Calendar; and you can hardly fail of valuable connections and valuable preferment, as thouſands can teſtify.

But though numbers may give them confidence, ſurely thoſe whoſe whole employment conſiſts in meanly hunting for preferment under the garb of ſanctity and religion, are moſt contemptible characters. Indeed, their diſpoſitions are uſually as narrow, ſelfiſh, and ſlaviſh, as their purſuits are ſordid, and unbecoming the dignity of a ſacred profeſſion. Ariſe, Cicero, for my ideas return with pleaſure to thee; ariſe, behold a pompous preacher, in a large peruke, and ſolemn canonicals, cringing to a debauchee and biſhop-making Lord, and pretending all the while that he is cultivating friendſhip in all its purity.

But would you forbid a young man the formation of connections, by which ſo many have availed themſelves, and riſen to real and deſerved grandeur? By no means; I would only teach him to preſerve a juſt reverence for himſelf, and to deſpiſe all riches and all honours which muſt be purchaſed at the expence of truth, virtue, and a manly ſpirit. I would, like others, adviſe every young man (and it is chiefly to the young that I preſume to ſuggeſt admonitions), to form connections, or rather friendſhips; but to be guided in his choice of them by perſonal merit and approved character. I do not ſay, for it would be unnatural and unwiſe, that he ſhould neglect intereſt, or deſpiſe advancement, when it can be procured conſiſtently with the ſpirit and integrity of an honeſt and delicate mind. If preferment comes unlooked for, and unſought by ſervile compliance, it is an honour as well as an advantage, and is doubly welcome. But if I muſt ſacrifice my reaſon and my conſcience, my honour and my freedom, in forming connections and purſuing preferment, I relinquiſh the chace, and eagerly retire to competency, contentment, and liberty.

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No. LXXXIX. AN ADDRESS TO A YOUNG SCHOLAR, ON THE COURSE OF A LIBERAL EDUCATION AT SCHOOL.

YOUR parents have watched over your helpleſs infancy, and conducted you, with many a pang, to an age at which your mind is capable of manly improvement. Their ſolicitude ſtill continues, and no trouble nor expence is ſpared in giving you all the inſtructions and accompliſhments which may enable you to act your part in life, as a man of poliſhed ſenſe and confirmed virtue. You have, then, already contracted a great debt of gratitude to them. You can pay it by no other method but by uſing the advantages which their goodneſs has afforded you.

If your own endeavours are deficient, it is in vain that you have tutors, books, and all the external apparatus of literary purſuits. You muſt love learning, if you intend to poſſeſs it. In order to love it, you muſt feel its delights; in order to feel its delights, you muſt apply to it, however irkſome at firſt, cloſely and conſtantly for a conſiderable time. If you have reſolution enough to do this, you cannot but love learning; for the mind always loves that to which it has been long, ſteadily, and voluntarily attached. Habits are formed, which render what was at firſt diſagreeable, not only pleaſant, but neceſſary.

Pleaſant, indeed, are all the paths which lead to polite and elegant literature. Yours, then, is ſurely a lot particularly happy. Your education is of ſuch a ſort, that its principal ſcope is to prepare you to receive a refined pleaſure during your life. Elegance, or delicacy of taſte, is one of the firſt objects of a claſſical diſcipline; and it is this fine quality which opens a new world to the ſcholar's view. Elegance of taſte has a connection with many virtues, and all of them virtues of the moſt amiable kind. It tends to render you, at once, good and

and agreeable. You muſt therefore be an enemy to your own enjoyments, if you enter on the diſcipline which leads to the attainment of a claſſical and liberal education with reluctance. Value duly the opportunities you enjoy, and which are denied to thouſands of your fellow-creatures.

Without exemplary diligence you will make but a contemptible proficiency. You may, indeed, paſs through the forms of ſchools and univerſities, but you will bring nothing away from them of real value. The proper ſort and degree of diligence you cannot poſſeſs, but by the efforts of your own reſolution. Your inſtructor may, indeed, confine you within the walls of a ſchool a certain number of hours. He may place books before you, and compel you to fix your eyes upon them; but no authority can chain down your mind. Your thoughts will eſcape from every external reſtraint, and, amidſt the moſt ſerious lectures, may be ranging in the wild purſuit of trifles or vice. Rules, reſtraints, commands, and puniſhments, may, indeed, aſſiſt in ſtrengthening your reſolution; but, without your own voluntary choice, your diligence will not often conduce to your pleaſure or advantage. Obvious as is this truth, yet it ſeems to be a ſecret to thoſe parents who expect to find their ſons improvement in proportion to the number of tutors and external aſſiſtances, which their opulence has enabled them to provide. Theſe aſſiſtances, indeed, are ſometimes afforded, chiefly with a view to enable the young heir to a title or eſtate, to indulge in idleneſs and nominal pleaſures. The leſſon is conſtrued to him, and the exerciſe written by the private tutor, while the hapleſs youth is engaged in ſome ruinous pleaſure, which, at the ſame time, prevents him from learning any thing deſirable, and leads to the formation of deſtructive habits, which can ſeldom be removed.

But the principal obſtacle to improvement at your ſchool, eſpecially if you are too plentifully ſupplied with money, is a perverſe ambition of being diſtinguiſhed as a boy of ſpirit in miſchievous pranks, in neglecting the taſks and leſſons, and for every vice and irregularity which the puerile age can admit. You will have ſenſe enough, I hope, to diſcover, beneath the maſk of

gaiety and good-nature, that malignant ſpirit of detraction, which endeavours to render the boy who applies to books, and to all the duties and proper buſineſs of the ſchool, ridiculous. You will ſee, by the light of your reaſon, that the ridicule is miſapplied. You will diſcover, that the boys who have recourſe to ridicule, are, for the moſt part, ſtupid, unfeeling, ignorant, and vicious. Their noiſy folly, their bold confidence, their contempt of learning, and their defiance of authority are, for the moſt part, the genuine effects of hardened inſenſibility. Let not their inſults and ill-treatment diſpirit you. If you yield to them with a tame and abject ſubmiſſion, they will not fail to triumph over you with additional inſolence. Diſplay a fortitude in your purſuits, equal in degree to the obſtinacy in which they perſiſt in theirs. Your fortitude will ſoon overcome theirs; which is, indeed, ſeldom any thing more than the audacity of a bully. Indeed, you cannot go through a ſchool with eaſe to yourſelf, and ſucceſs, without a conſiderable ſhare of courage. I do not mean that ſort of courage which leads to battles and contentions, but which enables you to have a will of your own, and to purſue what is right, amidſt all the perſecutions of ſurrounding enviers, dunces, and detractors. Ridicule is the weapon made uſe of at ſchool, as well as in the world, when the fortreſſes of virtue are to be aſſailed. You will effectually repel the attack by a dauntleſs ſpirit and unyielding perſeverance. Though numbers are againſt you, yet, with truth and rectitude on your ſide, you may be *ipſe agmen*, though alone, yet equal to an army.

By laying in a ſtore of uſeful knowledge, adorning your mind with elegant literature, improving and eſtabliſhing your conduct by virtuous principles, you cannot fail of being a comfort to thoſe friends who have ſupported you, of being happy within yourſelf, and of being well received by mankind. Honour and ſucceſs in life will probably attend you. Under all circumſtances you will have an internal reſource of conſolation and entertainment, of which no ſublunary viciſſitude can deprive you. Time ſhews how much wiſer your choice than that of your idle companions, who would gladly

gladly have drawn you into their aſſociation, or rather their conſpiracy, as it has been called, againſt good manners, and all that is honourable and uſeful. While you appear in ſociety as a reſpectable and valuable member of it, they have ſacrificed, at the ſhrine of vanity, pride, extravagance, and falſe pleaſure, their health and their ſenſe, their fortunes and their characters.

No. XC. THE WANT OF PIETY ARISES FROM THE WANT OF SENSIBILITY.

IT appears to me, that the mind of man, when it is free from natural defects and acquired corruption, feels no leſs a tendency to the indulgence of devotion, than to love, or to any other of the more refined and elevated affections. But debauchery and exceſs contribute greatly to deſtroy all the ſuſceptible delicacy with which nature uſually furniſhes the heart; and in the general extinction of our better qualities, it is no wonder that ſo pure a ſentiment as that of piety, ſhould be one of the firſt to expire.

It is certain that the underſtanding may be improved in a knowledge of the world, and in the arts of ſucceeding in it, while the heart, or whatever conſtitutes the ſeat of the moral and ſentimental feelings, is gradually receding from its original perfection. Indeed, experience ſeems to evince, that it is hardly poſſible to arrive at the character of a complete man of the world, without loſing many of the moſt valuable ſentiments of uncorrupted nature. A complete man of the world is an artificial being; he has diſcarded many of the native and laudable tendencies of his mind, and adopted a new ſyſtem of objects and propenſities of his own creation. Theſe are commonly groſs, coarſe, ſordid, ſelfiſh, and ſenſual. All, or either of theſe attributes, tend directly to blunt the ſenſe of every thing liberal, enlarged, diſintereſted; of every thing which partici-

pates

pates more of an intellectual than of a ſenſual nature. When the heart is tied down to the earth by luſt and avarice, it is not extraordinary, that the eye ſhould be ſeldom lifted up to heaven. To the man who ſpends his Sunday in the counting-houſe, in travelling (becauſe the day is fit for little elſe) in a poſt-coach and four, in the tavern, or in the brothel, thoſe who go to church appear as fools, and the buſineſs they go upon as nonſenſe. He is callous to the feelings of devotion; but he is tremblingly alive to all that gratifies his ſenſes or *his* intereſt.

It has been remarked of thoſe writers who have attacked chriſtianity, and repreſented *all religions* merely as diverſified modes of ſuperſtition, that they were indeed, for the moſt part, men of a metaphyſical and a diſputatious turn of mind, but uſually little diſtinguiſhed for benignity and generoſity. There was, amidſt all the pretenſions to logical ſagacity, a cloudineſs of ideas, and a coldneſs of heart, which rendered them very unfit judges on a queſtion in which the heart is chiefly intereſted; in which the language of nature is more expreſſive and convincing, than all the dreary ſubtleties of the diſmal metaphyſicians. Even the reaſoning faculty, on which we ſo greatly value ourſelves, may be perverted by refinement; and there is an abſtruſe, but vain and fooliſh philoſophy, which philoſophizes us out of the nobleſt parts of our noble nature. One of thoſe parts of us is our inſtinctive ſenſe of religion, of which not one of thoſe brutes which the philoſophers moſt admire, and to whoſe rank they wiſh to reduce us, is found, in the ſlighteſt degree, to participate.

Such philoſophers may be called, in a double ſenſe, the enemies of mankind. They not only endeavour to entice man from his duty, but to rob him of a moſt exalted and natural pleaſure. Such, ſurely, is the pleaſure of devotion. For when the ſoul riſes above this little orb, and pours its adoration at the throne of celeſtial majeſty, the holy fervour which it feels is itſelf a rapturous delight. Neither is this a declamatory repreſentation, but a truth felt and acknowledged by all the ſons of men; except thoſe who have been defective in ſenſibility, or who hoped to gratify the pride or the malignity

malignity of their hearts, by ſingular and pernicious ſpeculation.

Indeed, all diſputatious, controverſial, and metaphyſical writings, on the ſubject of religion, are unfavourable to genuine piety. We do not find, that the moſt renowned polemics in the church militant, were at all more attentive than others to the common offices of religion, or that they were actuated by any peculiar degree of devotion. The truth is, their religion centered in their heads; whereas its natural region is the heart. The heart! confined, alas! in colleges or libraries, unacquainted with all the tender charities of huſband, father, brother, friend; ſome of them have almoſt forgotten that they poſſeſs a heart. It has long ceaſed to beat with the pulſations of love and ſympathy, and has been engroſſed by pride on conquering an adverſary in the ſyllogiſtic combat, or by impotent anger on a defeat. With ſuch habits, and ſo defective a ſyſtem of feelings, can we expect that a Doctor of the Sorbonne, or the diſputing profeſſor of divinity, ſhould ever feel the flame that glowed in the boſoms of Mrs. Rowe, Mrs. Taſbot, or Mr. Nelſon?

An inexperienced and unobſervant man might expect to find extraordinary devotion and piety in the chapels and colleges of our Engliſh univerſities. Many of our academics are ſummoned to prayers, not leſs often than four times every day throughout the year. But do they attend voluntarily, or in obedience to a ſtatute? Is there any particular piety or decency in the performance of public worſhip? Quite the reverſe; for in no place of worſhip are the prayers read in a more careleſs or perfunctory manner; in none are more indecencies practiſed and connived at than in the chapels of our Engliſh univerſities. The reaſon is, that thoſe who attend in them conſiſt, for the moſt part, either of jolly fellows, who drown all thoughts in wine and its concomitants; or of dry logicians and metaphyſicians, who, in the towering heights of their wiſdom, are ſuperior to the weakneſſes of a devotee. I have ſeen in many a country church, where the congregation conſiſted only of honeſt huſbandmen and their families, more decency and more devotion, than in any chapel in the

the venerable ſeats of learning and of religion. A very amiable and ingenious writer has ventured to ſuggeſt, that even the clergy at large, from the habit of talking and diſputing with familiarity on ſubjects of religion, are leſs apt to indulge the ardour of devotion, than the common tribe of mankind, engaged in the varied and buſy ſcene of many-coloured life.

It is however certain, that a devotional taſte and habit are very deſirable in themſelves, excluſive of their effects in meliorating the morals and diſpoſition, and promoting preſent and future felicity. They add dignity, pleaſure, and ſecurity, to any age; but to old age they are the moſt becoming grace, the moſt ſubſtantial ſupport, and the ſweeteſt comfort. In order to preſerve them, it will be neceſſary to preſerve our ſenſibility; and nothing will contribute ſo much to this purpoſe as a life of temperance, innocence, and ſimplicity.

No. XCI. ON THE PLEASURES OF A GARDEN.

NOT he alone is to be eſteemed a benefactor to mankind who makes an uſeful diſcovery; but he alſo, who can point out and recommend an innocent pleaſure. Of this kind are the pleaſures ariſing from the obſervation of nature; and they are highly agreeable to every taſte uncorrupted by vicious indulgence.

There will always be many in a rich and civilized country, who, as they are born to the enjoyment of competent eſtates, engage not in buſineſs civil or profeſſional. But the reſtleſs mind muſt either find or make an object. Pleaſure, therefore, becomes, to the unemployed, a ſerious purſuit. Whatever is its eſſence, and whatever the declaimer may urge againſt it, pleaſure will be ſought by all who poſſeſs the liberty of election. It becomes then incumbent on the moraliſt, not only to urge the performance of duty, but to exhibit objects that pleaſe without enervating the mind, and gratify deſire without corrupting the principles.

Rural

Rural ſcenes, of almoſt every kind, are delightful to the mind of man. The verdant plain, the flowery mead, the meandering ſtream, the playful lamb, the warbling of birds, are all capable of exciting emotions gently agreeable. But the misfortune is, that the greater part are hurried on in the career of life with too great rapidity, to be able to give attention to that which ſolicits no paſſion. The darkeſt habitation in the dirtieſt ſtreet of the metropolis, where money can be earned, has greater charms, with many, than the groves of Hagley.

Yet the patron of refined pleaſure, the elegant Epicurus, fixed the ſeat of his enjoyment in a garden. He thought a tranquil ſpot, furniſhed with the united ſweets of art and nature, the beſt adapted to delicate repoſe. And even the ſeverer philoſophers of antiquity were wont to diſcourſe in the ſhade of a ſpreading tree, in ſome cultivated plantation.

It is obvious, on intuition, that nature often intended ſolely to pleaſe the eye in her vegetable productions. She decorates the flowret, that ſprings beneath our feet, in all the perfection of external beauty. She has clothed the garden with a conſtant ſucceſſion of various hues. Even the leaves of the tree undergo a pleaſing viciſſitude. The freſh verdure they exhibit in the ſpring, the various ſhades they aſſume in ſummer, the yellow and ruſſet tinge of autumn, and the nakedneſs of winter, afford a conſtant pleaſure to a picturesque imagination. From the ſnow-drop to the moſs-roſe, the flower-garden diſplays an infinite variety of ſhape and colour. The taſte of the florift has been ridiculed as trifling; yet ſurely without reaſon. Did nature bring forth the tulip and the lily, the roſe and the honeyſuckle, to be neglected by the haughty pretender to ſuperior reaſon? To omit a ſingle ſocial duty for the cultivation of a polyanthus, were ridiculous as well as criminal; but to paſs by the beauties laviſhed before us, without obſerving them, is no leſs ingratitude than ſtupidity. A bad heart finds little amuſement but in a communication with the active world, where ſcope is given for the indulgence of malignant paſſions; but an amiable diſpoſition

poſition is commonly known by a taſte for the beauties of the animal and the vegetable creation.

The northern countries of Europe are by no means well adapted to the true enjoyment of rural ſcenery. Our vernal ſeaſons, which the poets celebrate in all the luxuriance of deſcription, are commonly rendered cold and uncomfortable, by the long continuance of an eaſtern wind. Our poets borrowed their ideas of a ſpring from the poets of Italy, who collected theirs from nature. A genial day in April, is among us the ſubject of general congratulation. And, while the lilac bloſſoms, and the laburnum drops its golden cluſters, the ſhivering poſſeſſor of them is conſtrained to ſeek warmth at the ſide of his chimney. Yet, from the temperature of our climate we derive a beauty unknown in the gardens of a warmer country. Few objects are more pleaſing than the ſmooth lawn; but the ſoft verdure, which conſtitutes its beauty, is not to be found in more ſouthern climates. It is certainly true, that the rarity of our truly vernal weather, like that of other delights, increaſes the pleaſure of it; and it is probable, for this reaſon, that an Engliſhman, notwithſtanding his complaints againſt his atmoſphere, enjoys the pleaſures of a garden in their full perfection. A fine day, ſays Temple, is a kind of ſenſual pleaſure; but ſurely it would ceaſe to be ſuch, if every day were fine.

A practical attention to a garden, is by ſome eſteemed a degrading employment. It is true, indeed, that paſtoral and agricultural manners, if we may believe the dignified deſcriptions of Virgil, are greatly degenerated. The employments of ſhepherds and huſbandmen are now become mean and ſordid. The work of the garden is uſually left to a peaſant. Nor is it unreaſonable to aſſign the labour, which wearies without amuſement, to thoſe who are ſufficiently amuſed by the proſpect of their wages. But the operations of graſting, of inoculating, of pruning, of tranſplanting, are curious experiments in natural philoſophy; and, that they are pleaſing as well as curious, thoſe can teſtify, who remember what they felt on ſeeing their attempts ſucceed.

Among

Among the employments ſuitable to old age, Cicero has enumerated the care of a garden. It requires no great exertion of mind or body; and its ſatisfactions are of that kind which pleaſe without agitation. Its beneficial influence on health, is an additional reaſon for an attention to it at an age when infirmities abound.

In almoſt every deſcription of the ſeats of the bleſſed, ideas of a garden ſeem to have predominated. The word Paradiſe itſelf is ſynonymous with garden. The fields of Elyſium, that ſweet region of poeſy, are adorned with all that imagination can conceive to be delightful. Some of the moſt pleaſing paſſages of Milton, are thoſe in which he repreſents the happy Pair engaged in cultivating their bliſsful abode. Poets have always been delighted with the beauties of a garden. Lucan is repreſented by Juvenal as repoſing in his garden. Virgil's Georgics prove him to have been captivated with rural ſcenes; though, to the ſurpriſe of his readers, he has not aſſigned a book to the ſubject of a garden. Our Shenſtone made it his ſtudy; but, with all his taſte and fondneſs for it, he was not happy in it. The captivating ſcenes which he created at the Leaſowes, afforded him, it is ſaid, little pleaſure in the abſence of ſpectators. The truth is, he made the embelliſhment of his grounds, which ſhould have been the amuſement of his life, the buſineſs of it; and involved himſelf in ſuch troubles, by the expences it occaſioned, as neceſſarily excluded tranquil enjoyment.

It is the lot of few to poſſeſs territories extenſive and well adapted like his, to conſtitute an ornamented farm. Still fewer are capable of ſupporting the expence of preſerving it in good condition. But let not the rich ſuppoſe they have appropriated the pleaſures of a garden. The poſſeſſor of an acre, or a ſmaller portion, may receive a real pleaſure, from obſerving the progreſs of vegetation, even in a culinary plant. A very limited tract, properly attended to, will furniſh ample employment for an individual. Nor let it be thought a mean care; for the ſame hand that raiſed the cedar, formed the hyſſop on the wall. Even the orchard, cultivated ſolely for advantage, exhibits beauties unequalled in the ſhrubbery; nor can the green-houſe produce an appearance

performed without painful efforts, But they call forth the latent powers of the mind, and by requiring an exertion beyond the natural ſtrength, really compel it to effect all that it is able. Indolence prevents men in general from effecting all that they are able. The pleaſurable ſyſtem diſſuades them from the attempt. And if there were not ſome auſtere inſtructors, and ſome faithful followers of them, there would not be active virtue enough in a community to preſerve its exiſtence.

In the earlier periods of ſociety the grave philoſophy is moſt cultivated. For then virtuous exertions are moſt neceſſary, and luxurious indulgences precluded. Succeſs, and increaſe in wealth and glory, are the uſual conſequence. Luxury ſucceeds in a courſe as certain in all its ſtages as any phyſical progreſs. A taſte for a light, cheerful, fanciful philoſophy, ſoon explodes the ſudden precepts of rigid moraliſts. Manners are relaxed, and naturally bring on a declenſion of empire. At leaſt all regard for liberty is loſt; and the mind, enervated with pleaſure, gladly ſinks in the repoſe of deſpotiſm.

It is evident that in our own country, the ſeverer philoſophy loſes ground. This, among many others, is a ſymptom of corruption, and the harbinger of decay. An imitation of French manners has greatly accelerated this revolution in our ſentiments. And, after all, it is a forced and unnatural change; for an Engliſhman, whether from the influence of climate, or ſome cauſe inherent in his conſtitution, is by nature grave, and diſpoſed to admit manly thoughts, and to practiſe manly actions.

The influence of books on the national manners in a community, almoſt every member of which devotes ſome part of his time to reading, muſt be important. And among other methods which might be uſed to excite the ſpirit of patriotiſm and political virtue, it might be proper to reſtore a taſte for ſolid and ſevere morality, and to explode thoſe light, ſuperficial, ſentimental, and affected productions, which, while they pleaſe the ſickly mind, encreaſe its imbecility.

No.

No. XCIII. ON MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS.

IT was the early wiſh of Pope, that, when he died, not a ſtone might tell where he lay. It is a wiſh that will commonly be granted with reluctance. The affection of thoſe we leave behind us, is at a loſs for methods to diſplay its wonted ſolicitude, and ſeeks conſolation under ſorrow in doing honour to all that remains. It is natural that filial piety, parental tenderneſs, and conjugal love, ſhould mark, with ſome fond memorial, the clay-cold ſpot where the form, ſtill foſtered in the boſom, moulders away. And did affection go no farther, who could cenſure? But, in recording the virtues of the departed, either zeal or vanity often leads to an exceſs perfectly ludicrous.

A marble monument, with an inſcription palpably falſe and ridiculouſly pompous, is far more offenſive to true taſte, than the wooden memorial of the ruſtic, ſculptured with painted bones, and decked out with death's-head in all the colours of the rainbow. There is an elegance and a claſſical ſimplicity in the turf-clad heap of mould which covers the poor man's grave, though it has nothing to defend it from the inſults of the proud, but a bramble. The primroſe that grows upon it is a better ornament, than the gilded lies on the oppreſſor's tombſtone.

The proſtitution of praiſe is injurious to virtue. That imaginary life after death, which conſiſts in a remembrance of our worth cheriſhed in the breaſts of others, though it is deſpiſed by the ſevere reaſoner, has commonly been an additional motive for exertion to the nobleſt ſpirits that have dignified human nature. But when we ſee the ſtudied panegyric engraved on the marble that incloſes the remains of the worthleſs, we deſpiſe the eulogium that mankind are mean enough to beſtow on every one that will pay the price. Thus one powerful

powerful motive is loſt, which might operate on the generous in ſtimulating them to a worthy conduct.

On the tombſtones of the truly great, it is certainly right that an inſcription ſhould be written conſiſtent with their dignity. In order to be ſo, it muſt not be prolix. When their names and age make all the ſepulchral hiſtory of diſtinguiſhed perſonages, it ſeems to be implied that the reſt is ſufficiently known; but when the marble ambitiouſly enlarges on their excellence, it argues that the world wants the information. It is better that the paſſenger, when he ſees an eminent name, ſhould recollect, while he ſtrikes his penſive boſom, the virtues of its owner, than that his remarks ſhould be anticipated by an obtruding narrative.

The ſtyle of epitaphs uſually adopted has been too diffuſe. The noble ancients, thoſe patterns of unaffected magnificence, conſulted real dignity in the brevity of their epitaphs. As an hiſtorical monument, at an age when printing was unknown, they ſometimes engraved the exploits of a warrior on the marble; but in general they recorded little more than the name of the departed. The Grecian muſe ſometimes poured the ſweet melody of verſe at the ſhrine of a poet or hero; but ſhe never condeſcended to mean flattery, nor diſplayed the bloated oſtentation of a modern panegyric.

There are many excellent epitaphs in the Engliſh language, both in verſe and proſe. In the diffuſe kind, that on the infamous Chartres is a fine model. Weſtminſter Abbey exhibits many inſcriptions written with manly, forcible, and energetic elegance. The great fault has been, a redundance of epithets in the ſuperlative degree.

We have alſo many fine poetical epitaphs. Thoſe of Dryden and Pope are the moſt deſervedly celebrated; though thoſe of Pope have been ſeverely criticiſed. In general, the metrical are inferior to the proſaic. Some of the beſt are crowded with antitheſes, a fault which renders them inferior to the Grecian; and ſome of the worſt, many of which are found in the moſt public cœmeteries, ſtand forth a diſgrace to national taſte.

The

The love of rhyme deſcends to the loweſt ranks. The pariſh-clerk is commonly called upon for a ſtave or two of verſes, by every ruſtic that can raiſe a poſt and rail to the memory of his relation; and there are few church-yards in the kingdom, where that favourite ſtanza "Afflictions ſore long time I bore," does not occur more than once.

But our epitaphs are moſt commonly written in Latin; probably becauſe it is intelligible to foreigners, and is capable of more elegance and elevation. Our country has produced many writers remarkable for beautiful latinity: accordingly we find inſcriptions in every part of the kingdom abounding with claſſical expreſſions. The misfortune has been, that many of them have encroached on the province of biography; and real dignity has been loſt in the affectation of it, in a tedious and circumſtantial detail of deſcents, pedigrees, and relationſhip. The reader is tired, before he has obtained a clear idea of the character and family deſcribed. His eyes have failed, even if his attention perſevered. The epitaph on the pious Nelſon, for inſtance, conſiſts of above eighty lines.

The punning and epigrammatic epitaph was much in faſhion a century or two ago. That on fair Roſamond at Godſtow might ſurely have been replete with tender ſentiment, but it is merely a wretched diſtich of puns and monkiſh rhymes. This ſpecies is at preſent quite exploded, and little need be ſaid to prove its great impropriety. Falſe wit is always miſplaced, but the true ſeems to be excluded from the epitaph. Who can bear merriment or buffoonery on a tombſtone? The tender and elegiac, or the manly and ſevere ſtyle, ſeems to be beſt adapted to the monumental inſcription. But neither the pathetic nor ſublime is compatible with the ludicrous.

The authors of our epitaphs are ſeldom known. One of the beſt that I can recollect, was the claſſical Bourne. The few he has left us are maſter-pieces. That in Weſtminſter Abbey, on Dickinſon the architect, is truly ſublime.

In our iſland there has certainly been no dearth of genius for monumental inſcriptions; though there is one

one circumstance which might induce a foreigner to think the contrary. The famous Duchess of Marlborough is said to have offered, without success, five hundred pounds for an epitaph adequate to the dignity of her Duke. Her grace, whose taste was not very just, would probably have expected a history long enough to cover with inscription the unwieldy pile of stones called Blenheim-house. I cannot help thinking, that a tedious epitaph, minutely relating his atchievements, would rather lessen than exalt him in the eyes of mankind. Would not Alexander the Great have appeared rather beneath the dignity of that name, if it had been written on his tomb, that the son of Philip was reputed to have been, in his day, the wisest general, the boldest hero, the most accomplished man, with a hundred other attributes? Would he have excited much admiration, if he had been handed down to us, merely in an epitaph abounding with those inflated superlatives, which gothic ideas of grandeur have now introduced? It might have been a complimentary epitaph on an Alderman, who died of repletion; and would have borne an analogy to him in the circumstance of an unnatural tumour.

No. XCIV. CURSORY THOUGHTS ON BIOGRAPHY.

AMONG the many arguments advanced to recommend the study of history, it has been said, that it teaches wisdom without the danger of experience, and, by pointing out the paths of those who have gone before us, facilitates the journey of life. History has been called philosophy teaching by examples. But, after all, it must be allowed, that civil history is less capable of regulating moral than political conduct. The descriptions of battles, the accounts of debates, the characters of kings and heroes, contain very little that can regulate the actions of the private and the more numerous ranks in the community.

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But an exact and authentic account of individuals, who have greatly excelled in any of the departments of active or contemplative life; seems to be a mode of *instruction* best suited to an animal, like man, prone to *imitation*. When a single character is distinctly delineated, we can pursue the outline, with an ease equal to that with which the painter copies from the original picture placed before his eyes. We have the express authority of the pattern we have chosen to direct us in every emergency, and can tread, with implicit confidence, in the footsteps of the most distinguished men, without the suspense of deliberate selection. It is the remark of Aristotle, the story of an individual, as it is a single object, is comprehended more fully, and therefore attended to with greater pleasure, than a history in which many personages are introduced.

For these reasons, biography appears to be more instructive than civil history, though it has commonly been written with a less degree of attention. Herodotus is all sweetness. Thucydides exhibits the solid and austere beauties. Xenophon, the attic bee, presents us with a style flowing with honey. Livy displays a most masterly composition, and paints in glowing colours all that he relates. Sallust rivals his Grecian master; Guicciardin and Vertot have exhibited in their writings some of the genuine graces of the historic muse. But among biographers, scarcely any can justly claim a rank with the first writers of the golden age.

As a diligent collector of facts, as a warm friend to virtue, as an entertaining narrator, I venerate the name of Plutarch. His writings bear evident marks of extensive reading; and communicate much and multifarious knowledge. Theodore Gaza has said, that if all books were lost, and he might recover one, it should be Plutarch. He is indeed an invaluable treasure of ancient learning; for he selected passages from books now totally lost, and inserted them very liberally in his works. Add to this, that he is an admirable moralist. But his judgment seems not to have been always strong enough to manage the unwieldy mass of learning he had assembled. He indulged the weakest superstition.

He is ever relating ſtories, which Horace calls ANILES, or the tales of old women. Merely for an oſtentatious diſplay of erudition, he digreſſes beyond all reaſonable limits. His idea of drawing parallels was excellent; and he has ſometimes drawn them admirably, though, as the critics ſay, not without a partiality to his own countrymen. They have convicted him of this unphiloſophical attachment in the compariſon between Tully and Demoſthenes, Cato and Ariſtides, Sylla and Lyſander, Marcellus and Pelopidas.

They who are willing to allow him every other merit, give up his ſtyle as harſh and inelegant. Though certainly an uſeful, he cannot be eſteemed a fine writer; and whatever merit he poſſeſſes, his inſtance does not refute the aſſertion, that biographical has never yet equalled civil hiſtory.

The long and diffuſe accounts of Plutarch have been compared to coloſſal ſtatues; the conciſe hiſtories of Cornelius Nepos, to medallions. Cornelius Nepos has a claim from the age he flouriſhed in, from his language, and from his fidelity, to the rank of a claſſic; but by no means to the firſt rank. It is ſuſpected by many, that as Trogus was epitomized by Juſtin, ſo Nepos was abbreviated by a writer, who flouriſhed under Theodoſius in the decline of polite literature. The life of Atticus, if we may pronounce from internal evidence, continues unaltered, and reflects great honour on its writer, as a fine picture of a beautiful original.

Diogenes Laertius choſe a ſubject well adapted to diſplay ingenuity. The lives of the wiſeſt men whom the world ever produced, if well written, would have been a moſt valuable acquiſition to ancient learning. But, with a fine ſubject, he was a poor writer.

It is to be wiſhed, that Tacitus had more frequently exerciſed his talents in biography. His life of Agricola is, perhaps, the beſt biographical work that was ever compoſed. It is written in that beautiful energetic ſtyle, which characteriſes this ſpirited hiſtorian; and it is more pleaſing than his other works, becauſe it exhibits not a deformed portrait. Mallet's Life of Bacon is a good imitation of it.

Suetonius

Suetonius probably drew his pictures from the life, and they are loathſome to behold. They are, however, uſeful to the philoſopher, as they enable him to form a more complete idea of human nature in all the gradations of degeneracy and perfection. They are alſo well written. Conciſe, nervous, ſimple, they pleaſe by their perſpicuity, and their freedom from ambitious ornament. To the honour of their author it muſt be ſaid, that he appears to have advanced nothing through flattery or reſentment, nor to have ſuppreſſed any thing through fear, but to have paid an undaunted regard to veracity. Eraſmus obſerves, that he wrote as freely as the emperors whom he deſcribed had lived.

It is matter of ſurpriſe and regret, that we have not more biographers. Thouſands and tens of thouſands, eminent in every accompliſhment, whoſe examples might have inſtructed the world, are become as though they had never been. In our own country, it is true that there are many biographical compilations, but they are for the moſt part incomplete. Wood's Athenæ, though a book that does honour to the moſt celebrated univerſity, has no merit as an elegant compoſition. But I muſt not omit the tribute of praiſe to the writer of the life of Cicero; who has given us a moſt accurate account of one of the greateſt men that ever lived, in a ſtyle truly claſſical and manly. The public is alſo indebted to the author of the Rambler for many biographical attempts. His portraits would be more univerſally and permanently pleaſing, if he had not too often indulged his ſpleen, and converted a harſhneſs of feature into abſolute caricature. I never could admire either the writings or the life of the chief object of his panegyric, the unfortunate Savage.

Worth is often unknown, or known imperfectly, till after death; till that period, when it is too late to learn particular circumſtances with accuracy. Hence it has happened that many of our ſecond-rate authors and actors in every department of life, though richly deſerving a place in the annals of fame, are recorded only in thoſe volumes, where to be born and die, as Pope ſays, makes all the hiſtory.

To preſerve their own actions from oblivion and miſrepreſentation, ſome writers have been their own biographers. The taſk requires great delicacy. The very attempt indeed implies a conſiderable degree of ſelf-value; but it has been juſtified by the examples of Thuanus and Hume.

There has appeared in our times and country a biographical work on an extenſive plan. The firſt edition of the Biographia Britannica was well deſigned, yet unequally, and, upon the whole, indifferently executed. Many diſtinguiſhed lives are totally omitted; many inſignificant lives tediouſly deſcribed. Though there is ſometimes much labour and ſagacity exerted, yet there are few maſterly remarks. Moſt of the articles were furniſhed by writers of no great repute; and there was every reaſon for the new edition now undertaken. If I might preſume to ſuggeſt an improvement, I would adviſe, that elegantly engraved heads ſhould be prefixed to every life, whenever they can be procured; and that the materials ſhould not be collected from books only, but from the traditionary reports, and the manuſcript letters remaining in the families of deſcendants. The names of the living perſons who communicate the hints ſhould be added, both to ſecure and to confirm their authenticity.

I believe none of theſe improvements are made in the ſecond edition of the Biographia. I attribute the omiſſion to the want of pecuniary aſſiſtance. It is greatly to be lamented, that any kind of aſſiſtance ſhould be wanting in a work in which the national honour is highly intereſted.

No. XCV. ON HOSPITALITY, AND THE CIVILITIES OF COMMON LIFE.

IN the days of Horace, our countrymen were reputed to be ſavage in their behaviour to ſtrangers. Though in the preſent age the charge would be unjuſt, yet it muſt be owned, that there is a reſerve in the manner of an unadulterated Engliſhman, which ſeems to confirm the opinion, that he inherits a portion of that unſocial ſpirit which diſgraced his anceſtors. But whatever may be his natural propenſity, it is certain, that, in the liberal intercourſe and comprehenſive education which prevail in the preſent times, there is ſcarcely any country in the world where a more cordial hoſpitality is diſplayed, than in England.

The days of Elizabeth have been extolled as the days of genuine hoſpitality. The doors were thrown open, and, at the ſound of the dinner-bell, all the neighbouring country crowded to the ſmoking-table. Theſe were times indeed, ſays the railer againſt modern refinement. Yet it has been juſtly doubted, whether this indiſcriminate hoſpitality was laudable. There was ſomething generous and magnificent in the idea, and it gave the nobles of the land the influence of kings over their neighbourhood. Yet if its motive and its moral effect are conſidered, it will appear to be juſtly exploded. It proceeded from the love of power and from oſtentation, and it produced gluttony, drunkenneſs, and all their conſequent vices.

Conſidered in a charitable light, as affording food to the hungry, it will be found a leſs uſeful mode than the modern inſtitutions. It did not ſelect its objects: it conſidered not the degrees of indigence or of deſert. The conſequence was, that it increaſed indigence, and leſſened deſert; for experience has proved, that unneceſſary alms, however amiable the motive of them, do a real injury where they mean a benefit. They promote

more idleneſs, by teaching poverty to rely on other aid than the efforts of an honeſt induſtry.

The great number of houſes eſtabliſhed for the reception of travellers in every part of the kingdom, and the expeditious modes of travelling, which render delay unneceſſary, have contributed to reſtrain that general hoſpitality which opened the door to all who came. Such hoſpitality is no longer wanted; but there never was a time when judicious civility, of all kinds, was more liberally ſhewn to ſtrangers than the preſent. And whatever the old Romans or the modern Gauls may aſſert of Britiſh ferocity of manners, no Italian or Frenchman of character ever came to our ſeparated ſhore, without having felt delight at his hearty reception, and regret on his departure.

It ſeems probable that hoſpitality keeps pace with civilization. As the minds of a people are enlarged by improvements in knowledge, and communication with their neighbours, the ſelfiſh and moroſe affections gradually loſe ground. In ſeveral parts of Europe, where ſocial improvements have not yet reached, the traveller is either conſidered as lawful prey, or elſe totally diſregarded. On the other hand, we find the natives of the Society Iſles, ſeparated as they are from all the reſt of the world, and by no means far removed from the ſavage ſtate, remarkably hoſpitable. Though fear might in ſome degree cauſe their civility to Europeans, yet it was not the ſole motive of it; for we find their good offices, after all apprehenſions were removed, evidently proceeding from the tendereſt and moſt generous affection. On the firſt appearance of the Engliſh on their coaſts, they naturally conſidered them as enemies, and boldly oppoſed their invaſion. Many of them exhibited acts of heroiſm, in defence of their country, ſcarcely exceeded in the annals of antiquity. But no ſooner was the branch of peace held out, than they received their wonderful viſitors with open arms; with a humanity that reflects diſgrace on the maritime villages of Europe, where a ſhipwrecked fellow-creature, and fellow-countryman, has been deſtroyed for the ſake of plundering his veſſel. In other iſlands diſcovered

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by our circumnavigators, we find, that no kindneſs could mitigate the ferocity of the rude child of nature. The hoſpitality of barbarians, like all virtues that proceed not from principle, but from humour and accidental cauſes, is of little value. A clearer light than the light of nature is neceſſary to give a ſteady operation to the feelings of humanity.

The idea which chriſtianity has ſuggeſted of the relation in which all men ſtand to each other, is wonderfully adapted to promote univerſal hoſpitality. When we conſider all men as brothers, we ſhall naturally receive the ſtranger within our gates with cordial kindneſs, as a relation whom we have never yet ſeen before, and to whom we wiſh to diſplay ſome ſignal of our love. It is indeed true, that many who are juſtly eſteemed worthy perſons, do not reduce this generous idea to practice; and the reaſon ſeems to be, that they ſuffer the attachments of domeſtic life, and the connections of conſanguinity, to engroſs the whole of their affections. Add to this, that the actual exerciſe of beneficence requires ſomething which is leſs in our power than benevolence.

However juſt the complaints of the miſery of life, yet great occaſions for the diſplay of beneficence and liberality do not often occur. But there is an hourly neceſſity for the little kind offices of mutual civility. At the ſame time that they give pleaſure to others, they add to our own happineſs and improvement. Habitual acts of kindneſs have a powerful effect in ſoftening the heart. An intercourſe with poliſhed and humane company, tends to improve the diſpoſition, becauſe it requires a conformity of manners. And it is certain, that a ſenſe of decorum, and of a proper external behaviour, will reſtrain thoſe whoſe natural temper would otherwiſe break out in acrimonious and petulant converſation. Even the affectation of philanthropy will in time contribute to realiſe it. The pleaſure reſulting from an act of kindneſs naturally excites a wiſh to repeat it; and indeed the general eſteem which the character of benevolence procures, is ſufficient to induce thoſe to wiſh for it, who act only from the motives of intereſt.

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As we are placed in a world where natural evil abounds, we ought to render it ſupportable to each other, as far as human endeavours can avail. All that can add a ſweet ingredient to the bitter cup muſt be infuſed. Amid the multitude of thorns, every flower that will grow muſt be cultivated with care. But neither pomp nor power are of themſelves able to alleviate the load of life. The heart requires to be ſoothed by ſympathy. A thouſand little attentions from all around us are neceſſary to render our days agreeable. The appearance of neglect in any of thoſe with whom we are connected, chills our boſom with chagrin, or kindles the fire of reſentment. Nothing therefore ſeems ſo likely to enſure happineſs, as our mutual endeavours to promote it. Our ſingle endeavours, originating and terminating in ourſelves, are uſually unſucceſsful. Providence has taken care to ſecure that intercourſe which is neceſſary to the exiſtence of ſociety, by rendering it the greateſt ſweetener of human life.

By reciprocal attentions, we are enabled to become beneficent without expence. A ſmile, an affable addreſs, a look of approbation, are often capable of giving a greater pleaſure than pecuniary benefits can beſtow. The mere participation of the ſtudies and amuſements of others, at the ſame time that it gratifies ourſelves, is often an act of real humanity; becauſe others would not enjoy them without companions. A friendly viſit in a ſolitary hour, is often a greater act of kindneſs than a valuable preſent.

It is really matter of ſurpriſe, that thoſe who are diſtinguiſhed by rank and opulence, ſhould ever be unpopular in their neighbourhood. They muſt know the value of popularity, and ſurely nothing is more eaſily obtained by a ſuperior. Their notice confers honour; and the aſpiring heart of man is always delighted with diſtinction. A gracious look from them diffuſes happineſs on the lower ranks. But it uſually happens, that an overgrown rich man is not the favourite of a neighbouring country; and it is unfortunate, that pride or inadvertence often prevent men from acting the godlike part of making others happy, even when they might do it without inconvenience to themſelves.

No.

No. XCVI. ON THE MERIT OF ILLUSTRIOUS BIRTH.

THERE is ſcarcely any truth of which the world has been more frequently reminded by the moraliſts, than the unreaſonableneſs of that veneration which is paid to birth. They have been told, that virtue alone is true nobility; but though they have acknowledged the aſſertion to be founded in reaſon, they have continued, with uniform perſeverance, in the ſame error. The luminous glory of an illuſtrious anceſtor, ſeems to have diffuſed a brilliancy over a long line of deſcendants, too opaque of themſelves to emit any original irradiations.

Gratitude, which firſt raiſes a benefactor to a diſtinguiſhed rank in civil honours, is willing to continue its kindneſs to his immediate offspring. The diſtinction is rendered hereditary. This predilection for an anceſtor ſoon leads to the accumulation of honours and poſſeſſions in his ſucceſſors; and the incenſe originally offered, becauſe it was deſerved, is at laſt laviſhed at the ſhrine of opulence, independently of merit.

Subordination is, indeed, eſſential to ſociety. The order of nobles, as hereditary guardians of the laws, is found an uſeful political eſtabliſhment; and none ſeem ſo well adapted to ſupply it; as they who have been raiſed to eminence by their anceſtors, and who poſſeſs a territorial patrimony in the land which they are to protect. All that is contended for is, that the recommendation of birth may not ſet aſide or depreciate real merit, the praiſe of learning, and the intrinſic value of virtuous exertions.

It is a remarkable circumſtance in the hiſtory of mankind, that ſome of the beſt books have been written, and ſome of the greateſt atchievements performed, by thoſe whoſe origin was truly plebeian. The politeſt and genteeleſt books, whether the ſentiments or the

ſtyle be conſidered, have been produced by ſlaves, or the deſcendants of ſlaves. Horace, Phædrus, and Terence, wrote in a ſtyle which muſt have been the ſtandard of a court, to an intercourſe with which they were, however, by no means entitled by their extraction. The founders of the moſt diſtinguiſhed families emerged from the middle and the lower claſſes, by the ſuperior vigour of their natural abilities, or by extraordinary efforts, aſſiſted by fortune. And unleſs the adventitious circumſtances of wealth and civil honours can effect a change in the conſtituent principles of the mind and body, there is certainly no real ſuperiority to be derived in a boaſted pedigree of Tudors and Plantagenets.

And yet there have appeared flatterers who have indirectly ſuggeſted, that the minds of the nobility ſeem to be caſt in a finer mould, and to have an elegance inherent in their original conſtitution. According to this hypotheſis, we muſt go on to ſuppoſe, that the mind of a commoner, exalted to the higher order of ſenators, catches this elegance by the contagion of inviſible effluvia. On his creation he undergoes a kind of new birth, and puts off the exuviæ which encumbered and degraded him in the lower regions. Thus are all the occult perfections of noble blood to be infuſed by the mandate of a monarch. But no, ſaid Maximilian to a man who aſked to be ennobled by him, though I can give you riches and a title, I cannot make you noble.

In truth, there is many a nobleman, according to the genuine idea of nobility, even at the loom, at the plough, and in the ſhop; and many more in the middle ranks of mixed ſociety. This genuine idea contains in it generoſity, courage, ſpirit, and benevolence, the qualities of a warm and open heart, totally unconnected with the accidental advantages of riches and honour; and many an Engliſh ſailor has poſſeſſed more of the real hero than a lord of the admiralty.

If indeed there is any real difference in the quality of their blood, the advantage is probably on the ſide of the inferior claſſes. Their indigence and their manual employments require temperance and exerciſe, the beſt purifiers

purifiers of the animal juices. But the indolence which wealth excuſes, and the pleaſures which faſhionable life admits without reſtraint, have a natural tendency to vitiate the body as well as the mind. And among the many privileges inherited by him who boaſts nobility in his veins, he commonly receives the ſeeds of the moſt painful and the impureſt diſeaſes. He diſplays, indeed, a coronet on his coat of arms, and he has a long pedigree to peruſe with ſecret ſatisfaction; but he has often a gout or a ſcrophula, which makes him wiſh to exchange every drop derived from his Norman anceſtors, for the pure tide that warms a peaſant's boſom.

The ſpirit of freedom, moral, mental, and political, which prevails in England, precludes that unreaſonable attachment to birth, which in the countries of deſpotiſm, tends to elevate the noble to a rank ſuperior to humanity. In our neighbour's land, the region of external elegance united with real meanneſs, the implicit veneration paid to birth, adds to the weight of legal oppreſſion. A Frenchman of the plebeian order attends to a Count or a Marquis with all the ſilent ſubmiſſion of idolatry; on the contrary, there is no doubt but that an Engliſh Gondolier would box with the beſt Lord in the land, if he were affronted by him, without the leaſt regard for his ſtar and ribbon. It would indeed be an additional pleaſure to the natural delight of conqueſt, to have bruiſed a puny Lord. Even the more refined and poliſhed do not idoliſe illuſtrious birth. In truth, wealth appears to be the object of more univerſal veneration. Noble blood and noble titles, without an eſtate to ſupport them, meet with great compaſſion indeed, but with little reſpect; nor is the man who has raiſed himſelf to eminence, and who behaves well in it, neglected and deſpiſed becauſe he derives no luſtre from his foreſathers. In a commercial country, where gain is the general object, they who have been moſt ſucceſsful in its purſuit will be revered by many, whatever was their origin. In France, where honour is purſued from the monarch to the cleanſer of a jakes, the diſtinction of birth, even with extreme poverty, is enviable.

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The brother of a Marquis would rather ſtarve on a beggarly penſion, than pollute himſelf with a trade by which he might acquire the revenues of a German kingdom. In our land of good ſenſe, this folly is loſing ground; and the younger brothers of noble houſes, often think it no diſgrace to rival the heir in a princely fortune acquired by honourable merchandiſe.

As the world becomes more enlightened, the exorbitant value which has been placed on things not really valuable will decreaſe. Of all the effects of man's capricious admiration, there are few leſs rational than the preference of illuſtrious deſcent to perſonal merit, of diſeaſed and degenerate nobility to health, to courage, to learning, and to virtue. Of all the objects of purſuit which are not in our own power, the want of diſtinguiſhed birth may moſt eaſily be diſpenſed with, by thoſe who poſſeſs a ſolid judgment of that which makes and keeps us happy. There may be ſome reaſon to repine at the want of wealth and fame; but he who has derived from his parent health, vigour, and all the powers of perception, need not lament that he is unnoticed at the herald's office.

It has been obſerved, that virtue appears more amiable, when accompanied with beauty; it may be added, that it is more uſeful when recommended to the notice of mankind by the diſtinction of an honourable anceſtry. It is then greatly to be wiſhed, that the nobly born would endeavour to deſerve the reſpect which the world pays them with alacrity, by employing their influence to benevolent purpoſes; to thoſe purpoſes which can at all times be accompliſhed, even when the patriotic exertions of the field and cabinet are precluded.

No. XCVII. RELIGIOUS AND MORAL PRINCIPLES NOT ONLY CONSISTENT WITH, BUT PROMOTIVE OF, TRUE POLITENESS AND THE ART OF PLEASING.

A PHILOSOPHER who, in the auſterity of his virtue ſhould condemn the art of pleaſing as unworthy cultivation, would deſerve little attention from mankind, and might be diſmiſſed to his ſolitary tub, like his brother Diogenes. It is, indeed, the dictate of humanity, that we ſhould endeavour to render ourſelves agreeable to thoſe in whoſe company we are deſtined to travel in the journey of life. It is our intereſt, it is the ſource of perpetual ſatisfaction; it is one of our moſt important duties as men, and particularly required in the profeſſor of chriſtianity.

I have therefore lamented, that they who have taken the moſt pains to recommend an attention to the art of pleaſing, have urged it only on the mean motives of ſelf-intereſt. In order to attain the power of pleaſing they have recommended flattery and deceit; and though they have required in their pupils the appearances of many good qualities, they have not inſiſted on any one virtue.

It is my wiſh to exalt this amiable talent of pleaſing to the rank of a virtue founded on principle, and on the beſt diſpoſitions of human nature. I would ſeparate it from thoſe varniſhed qualities, which, like whited ſepulchres, are but a diſguiſe for internal deformity. A ſtudent of the art of pleaſing, as it is taught in the ſchool of faſhion, is all ſoftneſs and plauſibility, all benevolence and generoſity, all attention and aſſiduity, all gracefulneſs and gentility. Such is the external appearance; but compare it with his private life, with thoſe actions which paſs unſeen, and you will find them by no means correſpondent. You will uſually find a hard heart, meanneſs, ſelfiſhneſs, avarice, and a total want

want of those virtues from which alone true benevolence, sincere friendship, and gentleness of disposition can originate. You will, indeed, find even the appearances of benevolence and friendship proportioned to the supposed riches and rank of the person whose favour is cultivated.

It is a favourite maxim with those who teach the art of pleasing, that if you desire to please you can scarcely fail to please. But what motive, according to their doctrine, is to excite this desire? A wish to render all with whom you converse subservient to your interested purposes of avarice or ambition. It is a mean and despicable motive, when made the sole and constant principle of conversation and behaviour. If this life is the whole of our existence, if riches and civil honours are the chief good, if truth, honour, and generosity, are but names to adorn a declamation, then, indeed, they who practise the art of pleasing, according to the vulgar idea of it, are, after all, the truly and the only wise. But let us not deem so meanly of the world and its Creator; and if our favourable opinion of things is an error, it is not only pardonable but glorious; and a generous man will say, like the noble antient, he had rather err with a Socrates and a Plato, than be right with a Machiavel.

But, indeed, the virtues and the graces are much more nearly allied than they who are strangers to the virtues are willing to acknowledge. There is something extremely beautiful in all the moral virtues clearly understood and properly reduced to practice. Religion is also declared to be full of pleasantness, in that volume in which its nature is described with the greatest authenticity. It must indeed be allowed, that he who is actuated in his desire of pleasing by morality and religion, may very properly add all the embellishments of external gracefulness; and he may rest assured, that the sincerity of his principles, and the goodness of his character, will ensure a degree of success in his attempts to please, which a false pretender, with all his duplicity, can never attain.

If true politeness consists in yielding something of our own pretensions to the self-love of others, in repressing

preſſing our pride and arrogance, and in a gentleneſs of ſentiment and conduct; ſurely nothing can be more conducive to it than a religion which every where recommends brotherly love, meekneſs, and humility. I know not how paradoxical my opinion might appear to the faſhionable clubs at St. James's, or to the profeſſed men of the world, or to the proficient in what I call the *inſincere* art of pleaſing; but I cannot help thinking, that a true chriſtian, one who thinks and acts, as far as the infirmity of his nature will permit conſiſtently with his principles, poſſeſſes qualities more capable of pleaſing, than any of thoſe which are ſaid ſo eminently to have diſtinguiſhed a Marlborough and a Bolingbroke. The pious and amiable Mr. Nelſon ſeems to me to have deſerved the epithet of all-accompliſhed much better than he to whom it has been ſo often applied; and, if we may judge by his writings, and the accounts given of his life, as on the one hand there never was a better chriſtian, ſo on the other there never appeared a politer gentleman. It is evident that he derived his art of pleaſing, not from a ſtudy of the world, or practiſing the tricks of little worldlings, but from the lovely qualities recommended in the goſpel, and from an imitation of the humble Jeſus. They who ſtudy the art of pleaſing will probably have recourſe, as uſual, to the many volumes written on the ſubject in the French language, or to the poſthumous letters of a frenchified Engliſhman; and perhaps they would ſmile if an inſtructor were to refer them, for the beſt rules that have ever been given, to the ſermon on the Mount.

It is however certain, that the art of pleaſing which is founded on ſincere principles, derived from religion and morality, is as far ſuperior to that baſe art which conſiſts only in ſimulation and diſſimulation, as the fine brilliancy of the real diamond excels the luſtre of French paſte; or, as the roſeate hue on the cheek of Hebe, the painted viſage of a haggard courtezan. The inſincere art of pleaſing reſembles the inferior ſpecies of timber in a building, which, in order to pleaſe the eye, requires the aſſiſtance of paint; the art which is founded on ſincerity, is more like that which diſplays

far

far greater beauty in the variety and richneſs of its own native veins and colour. A ſhort time, or a ſlight touch, deſtroys the ſuperficial beauty of one; while the other acquires new graces from the hand of time.

The rules and doctrines of morality and religion tend to correct all the malignant qualities of the heart; ſuch as envy, malice, pride, and reſentment. In doing this, they cut off the very ſource of diſagreeable behaviour. Morality and religion inculcate whatever is juſt, mild, moderate, candid, and benevolent. In doing this, they effectually promote a ſyſtem of manners, which, without any ſiniſter deſign in the perſon who poſſeſſes them, cannot fail of being agreeable. If to theſe ſubſtantial powers of pleaſing are added the laſt poliſh of a graceful deportment, the habits acquired in good company, an acquaintance with men and manners, a taſte for polite arts and polite books, no other requiſites will be wanting to perfect the art. A man will be under no neceſſity of hurting his conſcience and his character in cultivating, I know not what, of a deceitful and affected behaviour. He may be at once pleaſing and reſpectable; and grow in favour with men, without offending his God.

It is one circumſtance greatly in favour of that art of pleaſing which I recommend, that, even if it ſhould not always ſucceed in pleaſing thoſe with whom we converſe, it will be ſure to pleaſe our own hearts; it will be ſure to ſatisfy our conſcience with a ſenſe of rectitude at the time we are acting under its direction, and to furniſh us with a tranquil delight, unalloyed by the remembrance of treachery and meanneſs, on a retroſpective review of our lives and converſations.

No. XCVIII. ON THE GUILT OF INCURRING DEBTS WITHOUT EITHER A PROSPECT OR AN INTENTION OF PAYMENT.

AMONG the various devices which young men have invented to involve themſelves in difficulties and in ruin, none is more frequent than that of incurring debt without any real neceſſity. No ſooner is the aſpiring youth emancipated from his ſchool, or his guardian and ſuperintendants, than he becomes, in his own idea, a man, and not only ſo, but a man of conſequence, whom it behoves to dreſs and make a figure. To accompliſh the purpoſe of making a figure, ſome expenſive vices are to be affected or practiſed. But as the ſtipends of young men, juſt entering into life, are uſually inconſiderable, it is neceſſary to borrow on the moſt diſadvantageous terms, or to purchaſe the various requiſites of a pleaſurable life on credit. The debt ſoon accumulates from ſmall beginnings to a great ſum. The young adventurer continues while his credit is good, in the ſame wild career; but adieu to real pleaſure, to improvement, to honeſt induſtry, and to a quiet mind. His peace is wounded. A perpetual load ſeems to weigh him down; and though his feelings may, by length of time and habit, become too callous to be affected by the miſery of his ſituation, yet he is loſt to all ſincere enjoyment; and if he does not fall a victim of deſpair, ſurvives only to gain a precarious exiſtence at the gaming table, to deceive the unwary, and to elude the reſearches of perſecuting creditors. Even if he is enabled, by the death of his parents or rich relations, to pay the debts which his youthful folly has contracted: yet he has ſuffered long and much, and loſt the beginning of life, the ſeaſon of rational delight and ſolid improvement, in diſtreſs and fears; in fabricating excuſes and pretences, and in flying from the eager purſuits of duns and bailiffs.

But

But this folly, however pregnant with misery, is entitled to pity, and may, in some degree, admit of those usual palliations, youthful ardour, and want of experience. Thousands, and tens of thousands have ruined their fortunes and their happiness by hastily running into debt before they knew the value of money, or the consequence of their embarrassments. We pity their misfortune, but in the first part of their progress we do not usually accuse them of absolute dishonesty.

But the habit of incurring debt, though in the earlier periods of life it may originate in thoughtlessness, commonly leads to a crime most atrocious in itself, and injurious to society. He who prayed against poverty, lest he should be poor and steal, understood human nature. Difficulties and distresses have a natural tendency to lessen the restraints of conscience. The fortress of honour, when stormed by that sort of poverty which is occasioned by profligacy, and not defended with sound principles (such as men of the world do not often possess), has for the most part yielded at discretion. He then who began with incurring debt merely because he was strongly stimulated by passion or fancy, and was not able to pay for their gratification, proceeds, when the habit is confirmed, and the first scruples are dismissed, to contract debt wherever unsuspecting confidence will afford him an opportunity.

If he possesses titles, distinction, or any kind of eminence, he will not find it difficult to gain credit. Young tradesmen, desirous of making connections, are ready to run any risque; and hope, if it is long before they receive their money, they shall not be without the great man's patronage or recommendation. But here also they are often deceived: for the great man considers all his creditors as his enemies, and never thinks of them but to contrive methods to avoid and deceive them. If he happens to receive any money, he takes care to expend it among strangers, who have no other demand upon him but for the commodity which he pays for at the time of purchase. The world is wide; and when one set of credulous tradesmen are wearied with expectation and disappointment; the great man migrates to another part of the town or country, and

and condescends to honour some ambitious but unfortunate mortal, with the honour of dealing with him. Thus the great man goes on during the greater part of his life, and when the creditors are importunate, and the horrors of a gaol impend, he collects his property and withdraws from the kingdom, or living in disguise, enjoys his luxuries, and laughs at his deluded tradesmen. Indeed, as most ill qualities go together, his pride is so great that he scarcely vouchsafes to bestow upon them a moment's consideration.

But while the builder, the draper, the taylor, the butcher, the baker, and the chandler, remain unpaid, the jockey and the horse-dealer, the mistress and the brother gamester, receive ready money with ostentatious profusion. Sharpers and prostitutes, with all the qualities of thievery, riot in those riches which ought to be paid to honest men, who, with their families, are reduced to a state of starving, by feeding, cloathing, and accommodating, in every respect, some hardened profligate, and extravagant debauchee. Who but must feel indignation when he sees a man in high life, as it is called, eating a joint of meat of some poor tradesman, whose children are at the same moment begging of their parent a morsel of bread? Who sees, without lifting up his hands, my Lord, or Sir John, sitting joyous at the head of a plentiful table, supplied, *gratis*, with every article, by the father of those children?

Indeed, the pride and vanity of some persons, who value themselves on their birth, or their fashionable mode of life, induces them to look upon themselves as a superior order of beings, and to presume that they have a right to be still supported by their tradesmen in profusion and elegance, even after they are reduced in their circumstances either by misfortune or misconduct. If an honest man makes his demand, he is impertinent; his insolence is not to be borne; he is dismissed; but not till he evidently shews that he will no longer supply the commodities in which he deals. On his dismission, some exception is taken to his account; a dispute ensues, and that dispute furnishes the fine gentleman or fine lady with a pretence for not paying the bill. In the mean time card parties, visitings,

viſitings, and all faſhionable pleaſures proceed as uſual —for who would be ſo vulgar as to attend to the impertinence of the ſcum of the earth, or ſuffer one faſhionable pleaſure to be ſet aſide by the clamorous importunity of a mean mechanic; though his meanneſs ariſes from his having ſpent his ſubſtance in ſupplying the perſon who deſpiſes him, with the inſtruments of luxury, or the neceſſaries of life?

The profligacy, the vanity, the unceaſing purſuit of pleaſure, and the paſſion for external appearance, which characteriſe the preſent age, are neceſſarily productive of expence; expences occaſion diſtreſs, and diſtreſs, where principles are deficient, diſhoneſty. No wonder then, that in no age have ſharpers, ſwindlers, and inſolvent contractors of debt, ſo much abounded. There is hardly any mode of public life, eſpecially in the metropolis, in which you can be engaged, without having your property expoſed to the depredations of villains, who have made cheating a profeſſion, and reduced the art of robbery to a ſyſtem.

Many of the perſons who live on the ſubſtance of others, by borrowing, purchaſing, or employing without intending, and without being able to pay, make a ſplendid figure, and paſs for gentlemen and men of honour. But however they may felicitate themſelves on their ſucceſs, and in the gratification of their pride and vanity, I ſhall not heſitate to pronounce them more criminal and deteſtable than highwaymen and houſe-breakers, becauſe, to the crime of actual theft, they add a moſt ungenerous breach of confidence.

No. XCIX. CURSORY REMARKS ON THE LIFE, STYLE, GENIUS, AND WRITINGS OF PETRARCH.

ONE of the firſt and brighteſt luminaries which appeared in the literary horizon, after a long and diſmal night, was the illuſtrious Franceſco Petrarch. He was born at Arezzo, as he informs us himſelf, though

though Voſſius denies it. He became archdeacon of Parma, and canon of the cathedral church of Padua, and might have arrived at the higheſt preferments which the popes can beſtow, if he had not diſdained ſome diſhoneſt and humiliating compliances.

To form an adequate idea of the merit of the writers who arrived at excellence in the dawn of literature, it is neceſſary to conſider, with attention, thoſe peculiar circumſtances which rendered even a mediocrity of learning a difficult attainment. Books were ſcarce, judicious inſtructors ſtill more uncommon, and the powerful inſtigation of cotemporary models in a great meaſure deficient. Petrarch's claim to entire originality is not however univerſally allowed. He certainly imitated Cino de Piſtoja; and Bayle ſays, he ſtole many of his ſentiments from him. Dante, indeed, preceded Petrarch, but I do not find that he made Dante his model. With real difficulties and impediments, and with few circumſtances to excite a ſpirit of enterpriſe, ſufficiently ardent and perſevering to ſurmount the very formidable obſtacles, it is really wonderful that any individual could aſcend, by his own efforts, the eminent heights of ſuperior excellence.

Such, however, was the native force of Petrarch's genius, that in the middle of an unenlightened age, he became celebrated throughout the civilized nations of Europe, as an orator, philoſopher, and poet.

His poetical fame is, indeed, the moſt diſtinguiſhed. Formed with the fineſt ſenſibility of ſoul, he had the peculiar felicity of being born in a country whoſe language is the language of love. The ardour, the conſtancy, and the romantic nature of his paſſion, rendered him univerſally popular in an amorous and romantic age. In our own country he became the pattern of one of our earlieſt poets, Henry Howard earl of Surrey. And, amidſt all the diſadvantages of a Northern and Gothic language, the Engliſh poet has celebrated his lovely Geraldine, in ſtrains which are ſaid, by ſome, to diſplay more of the genuine tenderneſs of nature, than thoſe in which the great Italian ſung his Laura.

"In the ſonnets of Surrey, ſays Mr. Warton, we are ſurpriſed to find nothing of the metaphyſical caſt which marks the Italian poets, his ſuppoſed maſters, eſpecially Petrarch.

Petrarch. Surrey's ſentiments are for the moſt part natural and unaffected, ariſing from his own feelings, and dictated by the preſent circumſtances. His poetry is alike unembarraſſed by learned alluſions or elaborate conceits. If our author copies Petrarch, it is Petrarch's better manner, when he deſcends from his Platonic abſtractions, his refinements of paſſion, his exaggerated compliments, and his play upon oppoſite ſentiments, into a track of tenderneſs, ſimplicity, and nature. Petrarch would have been a better poet had he been a worſe ſcholar. Yet, upon the whole, I ſhould as ſoon think of preferring Surrey to Petrarch, as of preferring a Gothic country church to a Grecian temple."

It is certainly true, that ſeveral of the poets who have devoted themſelves to the deſcription of the tender paſſion, have ſhewn that they really did not always feel it in its greateſt ſtrength and purity while they wrote. The love which nature inſpires does not dictate antitheſis, point, conceit, and witticiſm. But Ovid, the poet of love, abounds with theſe even in his moſt impaſſioned verſe. Cowley's miſtreſs is by no means replete with the language of paſſion. I know not that even the gentle Waller expreſſes the ſentiments which a tender and ardent lover feels and utters. Hammond has written like one who was but little ſmitten with the tender paſſion. Petrarch alſo, has often addreſſed his verſes to the underſtanding, when they ſhould have been directed to the feelings; has endeavoured to pleaſe the imagination with an oppoſition of images, when all his ſkill ſhould have been exerted in cauſing the nerves to vibrate at the touch of ſympathy. The mind of the reader is diſappointed, when, inſtead of the ſimple expreſſions of nature, he finds the ſubtilty of art; nor does he allow ingenuity on the ſubject of love to be a compenſation for pathos.

It has been ſaid his diction is obſcure. The want of perſpicuity ariſes chiefly from his having adopted a great many terms in the provincial language, which, ſince his time, has ceaſed to be colloquial in Italy, though it has been preſerved by the poets in imitation of their maſter. The admiſſion of antiquated expreſſions is allowed by the beſt judges to be an exquiſite

exquisite mode of adding a dignity to composition. It has been prescribed by the best critics, and practised by the best writers. And, with respect to the obscurity it may occasion, the fault is in the reader. Poetry has a language of its own. For the sake of elevation it is constrained to seek a diction remote from conversation or familiar prose. He who reads and criticises poetry, ought to be acquainted with its peculiar and idiomatic language. Homer, Virgil, Milton, wrote in a diction which will not be understood by him who has been solely conversant in the prosaic writings of their several languages. This, indeed, may be justly said, that the dignity of the epopœa may require this method of contracting a venerable air, much more than the humbler strains of the plaintive inamorato. If any part of Petrarch's obscurity arises from the confusion of his ideas, or his perplexed method of expressing them, no veneration for his name must protect him from censure. Indeed several very able critics have complained, that they could not understand him without an interpreter.

Enough of his meaning and of his beauties has been understood by his own countrymen, to give him the title of the Father of the Tuscan poetry. The classical excellence of his language has contributed to give a name to the century in which he lived; for the Italians call it *the good age of their language*, and attribute the happy effect in a great measure to Petrarch. Sweet, indeed, are the greater part of his sonnets, sweet their language, and sweet their sentiments. Though criticism may point out quaintnesses and unnatural conceits, may censure one part as metaphysical, and another as affected, yet the sensible reader will not judge by parts, but by the whole effect of an entire piece; and if his feelings have been often finely touched, and his imagination delighted, he will give himself up to the magic of the poet, and joining in the general applause, leave the cold critic to whisper his detraction disregarded.

The love-verses of many writers cannot be recommended without danger. But the sort of love which Petrarch felt, supposing the object a proper one, refines and ennobles humanity. It is a species of passion which

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was never felt in the ſlighteſt degree by the modern debauchee. It partakes ſomething of the nature of real devotion, and while it elevates human nature in idea, it contributes ſomething to its real exaltation. Chaſtity was the virtue of the age in which romantic love prevailed, and one virtue is allied to all. The age was virtuous, in compariſon with thoſe times in which love is degraded to its loweſt ſpecies, and even the philoſophers endeavour to reduce man to the humiliating condition of a mere animal.

But Petrarch is not to be conſidered only as an Italian poet. He wrote Latin poetry with great reputation; and, indeed, during his life, ſeems to have acquired more honour from that, than from his vernacular productions. It was for his Africa that he was crowned with laurel in the capital of Rome. This work was a kind of heroic poem in honour of Scipio Africanus, whoſe name, ſays he, I know not how, was dear to me from the earlieſt age.

His Africa is acknowledged to be an imperfect work. It had not the laſt hand of its great author. But it abounds with hiſtorical matter, and with the fictions of poetry. The hand of a maſter is viſible. The poetical fire ſometimes burns with genuine heat and light. Yet, upon the whole, it is a work more conſpicuous for genius than judgment, and wants that poliſh which a better age would certainly have beſtowed. Had Petrarch written nothing but Latin poetry, he would have poſſeſſed but a ſubordinate place in the temple of fame.

The proſe works of Petrarch are voluminous. He, indeed, is honoured with the name of the reſtorer of the Latin language. Great was his merit in recalling a language which had almoſt ſunk into oblivion; yet, I think, it had been fortunate enough for the reputation of Petrarch, if he had written all his works in his native language, which he poſſeſſed in perfection, and which had arrived, under the management of him and his cotemporary, at the ſtandard of claſſic elegance. Though he writes with ſpirit, and abounds with ſtriking and ſolid ſentiments, and diſplays no inconſiderable ſhare of learning, yet he cannot be called a good Latin writer.

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His ſtyle is harſh and uncouth; his ſentences are rugged and unpoliſhed. There is a ſingularity of manner which ſets him at a remote diſtance from the claſſics, and proves that he inſpected their works rather for their matter than their mode of treating it. There is, however, a native force and vivacity, which would have conſtituted diſtinguiſhed excellence, if the writer had condeſcended to have become an imitator of the ancients. An affectation of originality has often ſpoiled an ingenious work, by rendering it quaint and diſguſtful. The greateſt beauty of his proſaic writings, and a very valuable excellence it muſt be eſteemed, is the great and ſerious regard which he pays to piety and morality, and that ſpirit of philoſophy, which, though of a melancholy kind, is juſt and ſolid.

A reader is doubly pleaſed when he can turn from the works of a diſtinguiſhed writer, to his life, with equal complacency. In the life of Petrarch we find a noble and ſublime ſpirit, which induced him to prefer his muſe, his love, and his independence, to the favour of a papal deſpot. It is, indeed, the glorious privilege of genius to ſeek and to find its happineſs from its own reſources. Emboldened by the conſciouſneſs of its own ſtrength, and feeling an indignation at many of the changes and chances of this world, it is apt to ſpurn at worthleſs grandeur, and to deſpiſe thoſe whom the multitude adores.

Human nature muſt always have an object ſuſpended in its view. The lovely Laura was the object of Petrarch. The paſſion was romantic; the idea of her excellence imaginary; but it had a happy influence on the poet's mind. It called forth the latent fire of his genius, it exerciſed his fine fancy; and though the poet pours his plaintive verſe in ſtrains which affect our ſympathy, yet we are by no means to conſider him as unhappy. For it is a truth collected from long obſervation on human nature, that the pleaſure of the chace conſiſts in the purſuit, not in the attainment; and that it is often better to expect than to enjoy.

No. C. ON THE FOLLY AND WICKEDNESS OF WAR.

THE calamities attendant on a ſtate of war, ſeem to have prevented the mind of man from viewing it in the light of an abſurdity, and an object of ridicule as well as pity. But if we could ſuppoſe a ſuperior Being capable of beholding us miſerable mortals without compaſſion, there is, I think, very little doubt but the variety of military manœuvres and formalities, the pride, pomp, and circumſtance of war, and all the ingenious contrivances for the glorious purpoſes of mutual deſtruction, which ſeem to conſtitute the buſineſs of many whole kingdoms, would furniſh him with an entertainment like that which is received from the exhibition of a farce or a puppet-ſhow. But, notwithſtanding the ridiculouſneſs of all theſe ſolemnities, we, alas, are doomed to feel that they are no farce, but the concomitant circumſtances of a moſt woful tragedy.

The cauſes of war are for the moſt part ſuch as muſt diſgrace an animal pretending to rationality. Two poor mortals, elevated with the diſtinction of a golden bauble on their heads, called a crown, take offence at each other, without any reaſon, or with the very bad one of wiſhing for an opportunity of aggrandizing themſelves by making reciprocal depredations. The creatures of the court, and the leading men of the nation, who are uſually under the influence of the court, reſolve (for it is their intereſt) to ſupport their royal maſter, and are never at a loſs to invent ſome colourable pretence for engaging the nation in the horrors of war. Taxes the moſt burthenſome are levied, ſoldiers are collected, ſo as to leave a paucity of huſbandmen, reviews and encampments ſucceed, and at laſt fifteen or twenty thouſand men meet on a plain, and coolly ſhed each other's blood, without the ſmalleſt animoſity, or the ſhadow of a provocation. The kings,

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in the mean time, and the grandees, who have employed theſe poor innocent victims to ſhoot bullets at each others heads, remain quietly at home, and amuſe themſelves, in the intervals of balls, hunting ſchemes and pleaſures of every ſpecies, with reading at the fire-ſide, and over a cup of chocolate, the diſpatches from the army, and the news in the Extraordinary Gazette. Old Horace very truly obſerves, that whatever mad frolicks enter into the heads of kings, it is the common people, that is, the honeſt artizan, and the induſtrious tribes in the middle ranks, *unoffended* and *unoffending*, who chiefly ſuffer in the evil conſequences. If the king of Pruſſia were not at the head of ſome of the beſt troops in the univerſe, he would be judged more worthy of being tried, caſt and condemned at the Old Bailey, than any ſhedder of blood who ever died by a halter. But he is a king; but he is a hero!—thoſe names faſcinate us, and we enrol the butcher of mankind among their benefactors.

When one conſiders the dreadful circumſtances that attend even victories, one cannot help being a little ſhocked at the exultation which they occaſion. I have often thought it would be a laughable ſcene, if there were not a little too much of the melancholy in it, when a circle of eager politicians have met to congratulate each other on a piece of good news juſt arrived. Every eye ſparkles with delight; every voice is raiſed in announcing the happy event. And what is the cauſe of all this joy? and for what are our windows illuminated, bonfires kindled, bells rung, and feaſts celebrated? We have had a ſucceſsful engagement. We have left a thouſand of the enemy dead on the field of battle, and only nine hundred of our countrymen. Charming news! it was a glorious battle! But before you give a looſe to your raptures, pauſe a while; and conſider, that to every one of theſe nineteen hundred, life was no leſs ſweet than it is to you; that to the far greater part of them there probably were wives, fathers, mothers, ſons, daughters, ſiſters, brothers, and friends, all of whom are at this moment bewailing that event which occaſions your fooliſh and brutal triumph.

The whole time of a war ought to be time of general mourning, a mourning in the heart, a mourning much more ſincere than on the death of one of thoſe princes whoſe accurſed ambition is often the ſole cauſe of war. Indeed, that a whole people ſhould tamely ſubmit to the evils of war, becauſe it is the will of a few vain, ſelfiſh, ignorant, though exalted, individuals, is an unaccountable phœnomenon. But they are led away by falſe glory, by their paſſions, by their vices. They reflect not; and, indeed, if they did reflect, and oppoſe, what would avail the oppoſition of unarmed myriads to the mandate of a government ſupported by a ſtanding army? Many of the European nations are entirely military; war is their trade; and when they have no employment at home, or near it, they bluſh not to let themſelves out to ſhed any blood, in any cauſe of the beſt paymaſter. Ye beaſts of the foreſt, no longer allow that man is your ſuperior, while there is found on the face of the earth ſuch degeneracy!

Morality and religion forbid war in its motives, conduct, and conſequences; but to rulers and potentates morality and religion uſually appear as the inventions of politicians to facilitate ſubordination. The principal objects of crowned heads, and their minions, are the extenſion of empire, the augmentation of a revenue, or the annihilation of their ſubjects liberty. Their reſtraints in the purſuit of theſe objects are not thoſe of morality and religion; but ſolely reaſons of ſtate, and political caution. Plauſible words are uſed, but they are only uſed to hide the deformity of the real principles. Wherever a war is deemed deſirable in an intereſted view, a ſpecious pretext never yet remained unfound. Morality is as little conſidered in the beginning, as in the proſecution of war. The moſt ſolemn treaties and engagements are violated by the governing part of the nation, with no more ſcruple than oaths and bonds are broken by a cheat and a villain in the walks of private life. Does the difference of rank and ſituation make any difference in the atrocity of crimes? If any, it renders a thouſand times more criminal than that of a thief, the villainy of them, who, by violating every ſacred obligation between nation and nation,

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give rise to miseries and mischiefs most dreadful in their nature; and to which no human power can say, thus far *shall* ye proceed and no farther. Are not the natural and moral evils of life sufficient, but they must be rendered more acute, more numerous, and more embittered by artificial means? My heart bleeds over those complicated scenes of woe, for which no epithet can be found sufficiently descriptive. Language fails in labouring to express the horrors of war amid private families, who are so unfortunate as to be situated on the seat of it.

But war has always been permitted by Providence. It is, indeed, true; but it has been only permitted as the scourge of mankind. Let a spirit and activity be exerted in regulating the morals of a nation, equal to that with which war, and all its apparatus, are attended to, and mankind will no longer be scourged, neither will it be necessary to evacuate an empire of its members, for none will be superfluous. Let us, according to the advice of a pious Divine of the present age, think less of our fleets and armies, and more of our faith and practice. While we are warriors, with all our pretensions to civilization, we are savages.

No. CI. ON THE EFFECTS OF INTEMPERATE STUDY ON THE HEALTH, AND ON THE DUTY OF PAYING REGARD TO THE PRESERVATION OF HEALTH.

THERE is in general but little danger left good qualities and habits should be carried to excess. The moralist may, for the most part, recommend every audable and useful practice, without prescribing any oundaries to proficiency. The probability is, that ien will stop on this side, and not that they will go eyond the line of duty. But yet it is certain, that there ire some ingenuous spirits, who, actuated by a generous emulation, advance in the pursuit of a favourite excellence

cellence with so immoderate an ardour, and assiduity of application, as at once frustrates their purpose and injures their abilities.

As I have then, on many occasions, recommended a close attention to study, I think myself obliged, by motives of humanity, to suggest a few cautions which may prevent the evils of an intemperate application. I should, indeed, greatly lament, that any thing I have advanced in recommending to youth the cultivation of the mind, should lead them to neglect or injure that body on which the vigour of the mind greatly depends, and which, if it is disordered, often renders all other means of happiness and improvement ineffectual.

I am, indeed, the more inclined to enter on this subject, as I have seen very melancholy instances of nervous diseases entirely occasioned by intemperance in study, and its necessary concomitant, want of air and exercise. It is one circumstance peculiarly unhappy in these most unhappy of all diseases, that they seldom admit of cure, and therefore great and early vigilance should be exerted in their prevention.

A great student ought to be particularly attentive in the regulation of his diet. We learn from the writings of physicians, that the labour of the brain draws off those spirits which are necessary to promote digestion. The least and the lightest food under which we can possibly be easy, according to the advice of the celebrated Cheney, is particularly proper for the student. Such a diet will not only render the spirits cheerful, and invigorate all the faculties of the mind, but enable us to enjoy health with but a small share of exercise.

Exercise, however, is to be taken on every opportunity. But a solitary walk or ride, merely for the sake of exercise, and with no other object to stimulate our progress, as it is of all amusements the dullest, so it is found rather hurtful than advantageous. The mind still meditates in solitude, and the body at the same time labours; so that both are exhausted at once, and the student returns to his closet fatigued, dejected, and disappointed. Some little amusement must therefore be contrived, or some business engaged in, which may operate

operate as a loadſtone in attracting us, without being ſenſible of our own efforts, from our libraries, up the mountain and along the foreſt; where health, with all her thouſand joys, delights to fix her abode. A few cheerful companions in our walks will render them abundantly more healthful; for, according to the antient adage, they will ſerve inſtead of a carriage, or, in other words, prevent the ſenſation of fatigue.

Dejection of ſpirits is a certain conſequence of intemperate ſtudy; but dejection of ſpirits, long continued, cannot conſiſt with health. After a morning ſpent in a cloſer application than common, it will often be right to devote the reſt of the day to good company, and innocent pleaſures. Muſic is one of thoſe pleaſures, and the moſt delightful ſoother of the wearied mind. The heart dances at the ſound of the lyre; freſh ſpirits animate the veins; the clouds of dejection are diſſipated; and the ſoul ſhines out once more like the ſun after a miſt, in the blue expanſe of æther.

Nocturnal ſtudies, too long and too cloſely continued, ſeldom fail to injure the eyes, and together with them, the whole nervous ſyſtem. They who are impelled by neceſſity to work by night and by day, muſt indeed ſubmit with patience to their deſtiny; but that he who is maſter of his time, ſhould chain himſelf down to a more exhauſting toil than the labour of the galley-ſlave, is a ſpecies of folly approaching to inſanity. And, indeed, I know of nothing more likely to produce madneſs than intemperate ſtudy, with want of exerciſe, want of air, and want of ſleep. It will, after all, be but a poor comfort, to have gone through a whole library, and to have loſt our eyes and our ſenſes in the courſe of the laborious progreſs.

Every man of ſenſe will make uſe of all the known methods of ſecuring his health, were it merely on ſelfiſh motives, and for the ſake of preſerving his faculties and prolonging his life. But, omitting all ſelfiſh regards, I cannot help thinking, that an attention to the preſervation of health is an important duty. I do not recollect that it has often been recommended as a duty. But ſince our health is greatly in our own power; ſince we all enter into the world to engage in

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many active and neceſſary employments, and ſince the want of health will render us incapable of them, I cannot help thinking, that the care of our health may be numbered among the duties of indiſpenſable obligation. A ſound conſtitution of body is a bleſſing of heaven; and not to beſtow the utmoſt vigilance in preſerving a pearl of ſo ineſtimable a price, is a contempt of the gift, an inſult on the giver, and an impious ingratitude.

It is commonly ſaid, that he who wants the advice of phyſicians in the regulation of his uſual diet, after the age of thirty, wants alſo underſtanding; a defect which no phyſician can ſupply. It is indeed certain, that, at the age of thirty, a ſufficient degree of experience of what may be agreeable or diſagreeable to the conſtitution may have been collected. But, alas! few of us are willing to do all that we are able; few of us are ſo attentive, in the firſt portion of life, to the animal œconomy, as to remark with accuracy the cauſes of thoſe ſlight indiſpoſitions which are occaſioned by accidental exceſs in the gay and thoughtleſs hours of convivial enjoyment. We ſubmit to them, however they may undermine the conſtitution, from friendly and benevolent motives. We are apt to think, that it would be too ſelfiſh to refuſe to partake of the enjoyments of others merely to preſerve our own health. The midnight aſſembly and the luxurious banquet are leſs ſought for their own ſakes, than from good nature and a ſocial diſpoſition. But, perhaps, if we conſidered that we are not taking care of ourſelves merely on our own account, but for others, for our parents and our children, for our friends and for the public, we ſhould not deem a ſcrupulous regard to health, though it may lead us to avoid the feaſt and the revel, either ungenerous or unſocial. It would appear in the light of a very ſerious duty, derived from an obedience to the will of heaven, and from the regard we owe to our neighbour; and we ſhould be obliged to confeſs, that the nominal pleaſures of exceſs ought always to give place to real duty.

A ſcrupulous regard to health is, indeed, a duty incumbent on all; but, perhaps, more particularly to

to be attended by the learned and ingenious, as they are of all the moſt ſubject to indiſpoſition. A delicate frame is very often aſſociated with a ſtrong intellect; and a life of ſtudy, though a life of labour, is not adapted, like that of the manual labourer, to give elaſticity to the nerves, or vigour to the animal functions. But exceſſive eating, added to exceſſive ſtudy, muſt wear the machine much more than the ſubſtance of which it is conſtituted can long endure. If it is not ſoon broken in pieces, its wheels will be clogged, its ſprings broken, and the whole rendered uſeleſs and burthenſome. It is recorded of Mr. Pope, that he was an immoderate eater, that he kept a ſilver ſaucepan to dreſs dainties for himſelf in the intervals of his meals, and that he died of a ſaucepan of lampreys.

Whatever part of the ſyſtem of human affairs we examine, one truth appears to pervade the whole complicated maſs, which is, that there can be neither wiſdom nor happineſs, nor even enjoyment of the ſubordinate kinds, independently of moderation. In the moſt refined and elevated part of our conduct and purſuits, the ſame truth is no leſs viſible, than in the lower occupations of common life. Sweet are the pleaſures of contemplation, delightful the exerciſe of the mind in reading and reflection; but no pleaſure, however pure, muſt be invariably purſued, till we are removed into the world of ſpirits, and are enabled to enjoy intellectual pleaſures unalloyed and uninterrupted.

No. CII. ON THE PRESENT STATE OF CONVERSATION.

THERE is, perhaps, no method of improving the mind more efficacious, and certainly none more agreeable, than a mutual interchange of ſentiments in an elegant and animated converſation with the ſerious, the judicious, the learned, and the communicative. Light and heat are elicited by the colliſion of minds. Truths which appeared dull in the ſolitude of the ſtudy,

are no sooner agitated in conversation, than they affect the mind with the liveliest impressions. And it is one circumstance which, in a peculiar manner, recommends the mode of improvement by mutual discourse, that the social affections are no less powerfully exerted and exercised, than the powers of reason. By the display of both, the heart and the understanding are at once improved.

Such would be the description of him who should derive his ideas on the subject from a chosen few, or from his books. But let him consider conversation as it really appears in the living world, independently of theoretical and speculative refinement, and I fear, that, instead of finding it always attended with improvement, it will often appear to him a fertile source of corruption and degeneracy.

A young man who has just left his school, full of the ideas which the poets, philosophers, and historians of antiquity supply, will probably bid adieu to them all at the same time that he takes leave of his master; unless, indeed, his own choice should lead him to cultivate an acquaintance with them in private. Suppose him to pass from the school to an university. There, if he has spirit, he will of course seek the company, and imitate the manners, of those who possess a like spirit, and who are also celebrated as men of fashion. The conversation will therefore turn upon the subject of horses, dogs, drinking, dressing, debauchery, cajolling the old gentleman at home out of his money, to be spent in these laudable purposes, or running in debt with credulous and unfortunate tradesmen. Such will be the sublime contemplations, and the philosophical topics of discourse in the famed academic groves on the banks of the Cam and the Isis, and in the schools of science and theology. Even doctors, professors, tutors and lecturers, industriously avoid all topics connected with the species of learning and science which they profess, and most agreeably condescend to expatiate, in the common and combination room, on dogs, horses, and all the refined amusements of Granta and Rhedycina. Not but that there are a few who take a pleasure in conversing on letters; but they are solitary mortals, and themselves

themſelves are ſtigmatized, in the cant language of the place, with the name of *Quizzes*, and their converſation, with that of an inſufferable *Bore*.

If our ingenuous youth ſhould be tranſplanted from the nurſery of a ſchool into the army, he will find the converſation, in almoſt every reſpect, ſimilar to that of the univerſity. There will, indeed, be this difference, that as letters are not the particular buſineſs of a military life, they will ſometimes be the topic of converſation among military men; whereas, in the univerſity, they are entirely laid aſide, leſt they ſhould ſubject the academic to the imputation of pedantry; an imputation deemed infinitely more diſgraceful, than that of genteel ignorance and faſhionable debauchery.

Should he be introduced into the ſociety of nobles and legiſlators, he will ſtill find dogs and horſes, with all their concomitant ſports and amuſements, the favourite topic of diſcourſe. Literature would be voted dulneſs; morality, preaching; philoſophy, nonſenſe; and religion, hypocriſy. His Plato and his Tully will avail him little at the Cockpit, at a horſe-race, at a gaming-table, in the ſtud, and the dog-kennel. Such places are the uſual reſorts of the ſpirited and faſhionable part of very great men; of thoſe, whom the young, allured by the brilliancy of their career, would be moſt likely to follow.

Let him proceed in his enquiry after this refined and elegant converſation, and frequent, according to the uſual intercourſe of neighbourhood, the houſes of the rich, the reſpectable, and faſhionable, in private life. They ſhall be perſons of ſenſe and virtue, and yet nothing ſhall paſs in their converſation from which any of the boaſted advantages of it ſhall be perceived. For what, indeed, are the methods of paſſing time, among perſons of the beſt repute and genteeleſt condition, while they think it indiſpenſably neceſſary to move in the vortex of faſhion? Nothing grave, nothing abſtruſe, nothing ſpeculative; no moral maxim or critical remark, would be admitted in a polite circle of polite viſitors. There is evidently an uneaſineſs, a ſilence, an awkwardneſs, a vacuity, till cards are introduced. It is not a harſh delineation of modern manners to aſſert, that

that in general, and even among thoſe who certainly have a right to eſteem, there appears to be no taſte for any thing that deſerves the name of refined and ingenious converſation. The time of a viſit is for the moſt part ſpent in repeating the doubtful news of the day; in mere chat without conſequence or connection; in eating, drinking, and crowning the whole with whiſt and quadrille. All this may be very innocent and pleaſant as a relaxation; and the only point I maintain is, that the ſpecies of converſation from which improvement is to be derived, is not often found in the preſent ſyſtem of viſiting and converſing.

I know not whether our youth, were he to ſeek the ſociety of men in the profeſſions, would be certain of finding that ſort of converſe, from which, philoſophers inform us, ſo much moral and intellectual improvement is received. It is, I think, remarked by ſome one who went into the company of the clergy at one of their feaſts, in hopes of finding among them, that elegance and philoſophical ſpirit of converſe which he had in vain ſought among others, that nothing was talked of with any apparent animation, but the flavour of the veniſon, the fine reliſh of the hams, the richneſs of the pye-cruſt, and the excellence of the claret. Theſe, indeed, cauſed the moſt cordial congratulations; and theſe, interrupted only by the conjectures on the next vacancies in livings, ſtalls, and mitres, conſtituted the whole of the diſcourſe in a ſympoſium conſiſting of the inſtructors of mankind. If ſuch be the caſe, we are not to wonder that the ſublimer ſort of converſation is rarely to be found in the common ranks, who are often too deficient in education to be able to interchange their ſentiments with any conſiderable advantage to the mind or the morals.

It is ſaid, that a celebrated wit had ſought the company of Addiſon with uncommon ſolicitude, and with a hope of being delighted with that fine humour which is ſo conſpicuous in his writings; but that Addiſon did not talk, though he paid it off in drinking, which he did ſo intemperately, that nature was obliged to throw off her load; upon which circumſtance the viſitor, on his departure, remarked, that no good thing had come

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out of his mouth that night but the wine. Let it, however, be remembered by thoſe who bring ſuch inſtances in their own juſtification, that the cauſe of Addiſon's taciturnity was, a natural diffidence in the company of ſtrangers, to diſmiſs which he took his glaſs more freely than he might otherwiſe have done; and that, among a choſen few, his converſation was at once improving and delightful.

In ſome circles it is poſſible to be a very excellent companion without uttering a ſingle ſentiment, or a ſingle word more than is neceſſary to repeat the toaſt. In theſe indeed, the wit of a Swift, the humour of a Quin, and the fine philoſophical ſpirit of an Addiſon, would not be deemed half ſo agreeable as the good-natured eaſe of him who counts no hours, but ſilently ſits and inhales and exhales, through a tube of clay, the ſmoke of tobacco. If ſuch perſons are philoſophers, one might gueſs from their taciturnity, that they are the diſciples of Pythagoras.

In the lower ranks of mankind we muſt not expect refinement. Liberal and ingenious ideas muſt have been collected by reading, before converſation can be advanced to the perfection of which it is capable. We readily therefore pardon thoſe defects which could not eaſily have been ſupplied. We are not ſurpriſed at ribaldry, noiſe, and nonſenſe, in the ſociety of the vulgar, and of thoſe who ſeek relief from bodily labour, in coarſe mirth, and unſelected ſociety. But that perſons who have improved their reaſon, and who have leiſure for all the refinements of intellectual pleaſure, ſhould neglect the means of ſo much advantage and ſatisfaction as might be derived from converſation properly conducted, is an additional inſtance of our folly, in diſregarding the moſt obvious means of improving our happineſs and our condition.

I know it may be ſaid, that, as relaxation is often the principal object of our mutual intercourſe, to render converſation a ſtudy, and the effect of care and meditation, is to defeat its purpoſe. But let it be remembered, that the improvements in converſation which I recommend, contribute no leſs to encreaſe the pleaſure than the advantage of it. I recommend no ſtiffneſs,

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no improper ſolemnity, or diſagreeable formality; but eaſe, elegance, politeneſs, united with ſenſe, taſte, learning, and with a communicative diſpoſition. Cards are not diſapproved in general; nothing, however light, while it is innocent, is totally prohibited; and all that I contend for is, that, where circumſtances admit, and in a proper alternation, literature, the fine arts, natural and moral philoſophy, hiſtory, and whatever exerciſes the better powers of the underſtanding, ſhould contribute to fill up the many hours which we uſually ſpend in company. Theſe things would often preclude inſipidity, ſcandal, gaming, and intemperance. Such would be their valuable effects conſidered only negatively. But they would do more, they would exalt and refine the human mind, and would prove what man ſo often boaſts without exhibiting ſufficient proofs of it, that he is an animal not only ſocial, but rational.

No. CIII. ON GOODNESS OF HEART.

WHOEVER has made accurate obſervations on men and manners, will eaſily perceive that the praiſe of goodneſs of heart is uſually accompanied with an oblique inſinuation of intellectual imbecility. I believe him to be a well-meaning man, ſays the malignant panegyriſt, and if there is any fault in him, it will be found rather in his head than in his heart. Nothing could be better contrived by a crafty and envious world, to render this amiable quality contemptible, than to repreſent it as the effect, or as the companion of folly.

It is, indeed true, that innocence and integrity are uſually accompanied with ſimplicity; not, however, with that ſort of ſimplicity which is ſometimes ſynonimous with folly; but with an amiable openneſs of manners, which had rather loſe its objects, than obtain them by deceit; which leads the tongue boldly to ſpeak, what the heart honeſtly conceives. If we weigh the ſatisfactions of an open and upright conduct, of a clear conſcience,

conſcience, and of that liberty which we enjoy by thinking, ſpeaking, and acting, without mean and ſervile reſtraints, it will, I believe, be found, that this ſimplicity is true wiſdom, and that the cunning of the worldly wiſe is real and egregious imprudence.

Goodneſs of heart, whether it be a natural or acquired goodneſs, is, indeed, in every reſpect, the higheſt wiſdom. It is the only quality which can reſcue human nature from the diſgrace and miſery of its wretched weakneſſes, and its powerful tendencies to evil. It raiſes the poor worm, that otherwiſe crawls on a dunghill, and ſtings and bites his wretched companions, to an exalted place in the ſcale of being, and cauſes him to aſſimilate with the divine nature.

I ſhall exhibit to my youthful readers, whoſe hearts are yet ſuſceptible of whatever bias they chuſe to give them, two characters; in one of which appeared goodneſs of heart, and in the other, worldly wiſdom or cunning, or the art of pleaſing for the ſake of profit. If any one ſhould heſitate in chuſing whether of the two ſhall be his model, he need not heſitate at beginning a reformation of himſelf, for he may depend upon it, than his own heart ſtands greatly in need of amendment.

Serpens (for ſuch let us ſuppoſe to be his name) has perſuaded himſelf that he ſees farther into things than the reſt of his ſpecies. He conſiders religion as prieſtcraft, morality as the invention of politicians, and taſte and literature as the amuſements of fools. His philoſophy, and his purſuits in general, are all circumſcribed within limits extremely narrow. Pleaſure and intereſt are his chief good, his only objects of ſerious purſuit; and in the attainment of theſe he is not ſcrupulouſly delicate. There is, indeed, no virtue or good quality, the appearance of which he does not aſſume; becauſe, while mankind are weak enough to judge and eſteem men according to moral and religious prejudices, a plauſible appearance is eſſentially neceſſary to ſucceſs in life. External decency is his higheſt aim. Sincerity or ſound principles would but retard his purpoſes. Compaſſion he never felt, and is equally a ſtranger to love and friendſhip, though he is always profeſſing them to perſons

perſons of fortune and diſtinction, whom he idolizes with religious adoration; and this is the only ſentiment which he feels, bordering upon religion.

By a life ſpent in abject ſervility, in courting a capricious world, in deceiving the credulous, in contriving ſchemes of advantage or pleaſure, and in hardening his conſcience, he has at laſt, in his fiftieth year, obtained ſome promotion, and accumulated a handſome ſum of money. But he cannot enjoy it now he is poſſeſſed of it. The ſame greedy ſelfiſhneſs which taught him to debaſe his ſoul in purſuing intereſt and private gratification, ſtill operates on his conduct, and renders him a complete miſer. Though he has long enjoyed a competency, he never had ſpirit enough to marry. He was afraid of the expence. He hates his relations, becauſe he thinks they expect his fortune at his deceaſe. He has made no real friends, though he has deceived thouſands by profeſſing friendſhip for the eaſier accompliſhment of his dirty deſigns. All the neighbours deteſt him; and he envies every one of them who appears to be happier than himſelf, which indeed they all do; for his heart is torn with malignity, with fears, anxieties, and covetouſneſs. He bears, however, the character of a ſhrewd and ſenſible man, one who knows the world, and learned, at an early age, to make it his bubble. His advice is conſidered as an oracle in all pecuniary buſineſs, and no attorney would be half ſo much conſulted, if he did not render himſelf almoſt inacceſſible by the moroſeneſs of his temper. As in his youth, he was all ſubmiſſion and gentleneſs, and perfectly ſkilled in the celebrated art of pleaſing; ſo now, when the maſque is no longer neceſſary, his natural diſpoſition breaks out in all its horrid deformity. But the miſery which he occaſions to all around him, falls upon himſelf, by the juſt retribution of Providence. The heart, which has been the receptacle of every vice and every meanneſs, is always the ſeat of uneaſy ſenſation. The ſtupid inſenſibility with reſpect to the finer feelings, which uſually characterizes that ſort of ſhrewd men, who are celebrated in the world as men who *know things ſo well*, may, indeed, guard them

them from pungent affliction, but it is itſelf a curſe moſt devoutly to be deprecated.

Simplicius was the ſon of parents remarkable for the piety and regularity of their lives. He received a liberal education in its moſt comprehenſive form, and found every moral inſtruction which he derived from books, and from his preceptor, confirmed by example at home. All his delicate ſenſibilities were gradually nurſed to a ſtate of perfection by the innocence and temperance of his life; by the piety and virtue of his family, in which ſuch reſpect was paid to him while a boy, that not a word that could convey a looſe or improper idea was ever uttered in his preſence. He married early, and obeyed the dictates of his heart in ſelecting a moſt amiable woman of beauty, ſenſe, and temper, but of little or no fortune. The ſhrewd and wiſe men of the world laughed and pitied. Simplicius, however, had never any reaſon to repent. His children are his chief delight; but he loves his friends with ſincere and unalterable affection; and there is no ſpecies of diſtreſs which he does not pity and relieve to the beſt of his power. The amiableneſs of his manners, and the regularity of his conduct, gave him the advantage of character, the want of which can ſeldom be ſupplied by any worldly policy. With this powerful recommendation he has made his way to eminence, and enjoys his ſucceſs with the trueſt reliſh. It is, indeed, unembittered by any reflection on ſiniſter modes of ſecuring it. He always proceeded in the ſtrait road of common ſenſe and common honeſty. He knew of no obliquities; for, indeed, he found the art of life very plain and eaſy, and by no means ſuch as requires the precepts of a Machiavel. His heart and his underſtanding are both excellent; and co-operating with each other, have conducted him to happineſs through the flowery paths of innocence. His heart has been a perpetual ſpring of agreeable ſenſations to himſelf, and to all who were ſo fortunate as to be allied to him by kindred, by affinity, by acquaintance, or in the courſe of his negociations. A good conſcience will cauſe the evening of life to cloſe in the ſweeteſt ſerenity, as the day has been diſtinguiſhed by unclouded ſunſhine.

Whatever

Whatever the ſhort-ſighted votaries of avarice and ambition may aſſert, there is no doubt but that real goodneſs of heart is the nobleſt ornament of human nature, and the leaſt fallible ſource of permanent ſatisfaction. I have often therefore lamented, that in the courſe of what is called a liberal education, very little attention has been paid at our beſt ſchools to the culture of the heart. While good ſeeds have been ſown in the underſtanding, the heart has been ſuffered to be overrun with weeds and briars. In truth, learning and abilities, without goodneſs of heart, conſtitute that kind of wiſdom which is fooliſhneſs in the ſight of reaſon and of God. Without goodneſs of heart, man, however accompliſhed, is ſo far from being but a little lower than the angels, that he is ſcarcely above the accurſed ſpirits, and by no means equal to many of the brutes, who often exhibit moſt amiable inſtances of a good heart in the virtues of gratitude, ſincere affection, and fidelity.

No. CIV. ON THE CHARACTERS OF THEOPHRASTUS.

IF portraits of the ancient Athenians, painted from the life by the artiſts of the times, had deſcended to the preſent age, they would have attracted univerſal notice, and have been juſtly conſidered as invaluable. The productions, however, of the pencil are not proof againſt the corroſions of time; but though we have no original pictures of the perſons of the antient Athenians, we have admirable ſketches of their minds delineated by Theophraſtus. I do not mean deſcriptions of heroes, philoſophers, or poets. They are to be found in the writings of the hiſtorian. Theophraſtus has taken his models from private and common life; from perſons too obſcure to adorn the page of hiſtory, but who conſtitute ſubjects well adapted to the purpoſe of him who ſtudies the anatomy of human nature. It is, indeed, extremely curious and amuſing to diſcover ſtrokes of character

character in the citizens of Athens, who lived above two thouſand years ago, exactly ſimilar to the manners of the preſent day as they appear in London, and in other parts of civilized Europe.

Theophraſtus entered on the undertaking of delineating the characters of his countrymen at the age of ninety-nine; an age at which he had treaſured up a multitude of ideas from converſe and obſervation. His deſign was to ſtigmatize follies, foibles, and little vices rather than atrocious crimes. He meant, as he informs us himſelf in his preface, that poſterity ſhould learn from the patterns which he ſhould leave them, to judge of characters with accurate diſcrimination, and to ſelect ſuch perſons for friendſhip and acquaintance as might communicate excellence equal to their own, by exciting a ſpirit of generous emulation.

I will tranſcribe a ſingle extract for the amuſement of my reader, deſiring him to keep in his mind the idea, that the writer of the character, and the perſon characterized, lived above three hundred years before the Chriſtian æra. It will alſo be proper, in order to receive all the pleaſure which the peruſal of Theophraſtus is capable of affording, that the reader ſhould conſider, whether many features of the character have not fallen under his own obſervation.

The following paſſage is taken from his ſection on the art of pleaſing; and ſhews, that this boaſted art, as it is now taught, is no modern diſcovery; but is, at all times, the genuine offspring of meanneſs and ſelf-intereſt.

"The art of pleaſing," ſays he, "is a kind of behaviour in the company of another, which tends, indeed, to give pleaſure, but not for the beſt of purpoſes. The perſon who ſtudies it, is ſuch an one as, after having ſaluted a man a great way off, and called him the beſt man in the world, and admired him ſufficiently, takes him by both his hands, and will not let him go; but accompanying him a little way, aſks when he ſhall have the pleaſure of ſeeing him again; nor does he take leave after all without a thouſand compliments and praiſes. When he is called in as an arbitrator, he is not only deſirous of pleaſing the party on whoſe

ſide

ſide he appears, but the adverſary alſo, that he may ſeem to be the common friend of both. He tells a foreign gentleman, that he really ſpeaks the language with a better accent than the natives. When he is invited to dinner, he inſiſts upon the gentleman's letting the little children come in, and the moment he ſees them, he declares, they are more like their father than one fig is like another; and taking them by the hand, he kiſſes them, and makes them ſit next to him, and plays with them himſelf, ſaying, here is a little trinket for one, and here is a little hatchet for the other; and he lets them fall aſleep on his lap, ſeeming to be highly delighted, though he ſits on thorns all the while. He ſhaves his face very often; he keeps his teeth accurately clean; lays aſide his clothes, even while they are good, becauſe the faſhion is changed, and takes care to be perfumed with the beſt perfume. In all public places he is ſeen talking, or ſitting, with the principal perſons, &c." It is not conſiſtent with my deſign to fill my paper with citations, or it would be eaſy to produce many antient pieces from this moral painter, which deſerve to be highly eſteemed on account of the age and curioſity. The paintings, it muſt be owned, are rather in the Flemiſh ſtyle, and many of them partake of the caricatura.

But though I commend the pieces as curioſities, I would by no means be underſtood to praiſe them as perfect, or as ſtandards for imitation. Whether they have undergone mutilation or tranſpoſitions, or whether the author, in extreme old age, had not ſpirits to review what he wrote, it is not eaſy to determine: but it is certain, that there is often a total want of connection, and that many ſtrokes are admitted not at all applicable to the character to which they are applied. Indeed it appears probable, that the characters were real ones, and the remarks perſonal. So that though the author began with a general foible or folly, yet, purſuing the model from which he drew in all its parts, he was led, by an accurate delineation of the whole, to ſome particularities not at all connected with the predominant features of the general character.

With reſpect to the ſtyle of this little book, I cannot diſcover any beauties ſo peculiarly ſtriking as could induce

induce Ariſtotle to change this author's name from Tyrtamus to that of Theophraſtus. There were, however, it is probable, in his other works, ſome very diſtinguiſhed excellencies of diction, ſince they procured him, from one of the beſt critics whom the world ever ſaw, a name, which ſignified, that he expreſſed himſelf like a god. Diogenes Laertius informs us, that he wrote no fewer than two hundred and twenty books; but ſcarcely any of them have eſcaped the hand of envious time. The characters are greatly mutilated, and many of them loſt. It is, indeed, ſuppoſed, that, as in this treatiſe he has repreſented faults only, he wrote another, in which he preſented to the view the more amiable picture of virtuous and agreeable characters. Very high commendations are paid to his Treatiſe on Plants; but it is but little read, ſince the great improvements which have been made by the moderns in the ſcience of botany. Upon the whole of his character, Caſaubon appears to have remarked, with juſtice, that he was worthy of that age which produced the glorious triumvirate, Socrates, Plato, and Ariſtotle.

Many commentaries have been written to facilitate the reading of the characters; but I cannot help thinking, that this is one of the few antient books, in the illuſtration of which, learning is leſs neceſſary than a knowledge of the world.

No. CV. ON SEVERAL PASSAGES IN THE ENCHIRIDION OR MANUAL OF EPICTETUS.

THERE is ſcarcely any of the philoſophical ſect which has not adopted ſome abſurdity amidſt a great variety of wiſe and valuable doctrine. Like all inventors and ſelectors of their own ſyſtems, they have been hurried to exceſs, and have diſgraced the rational parts of their philoſophy by far-fetched refinements, or by fooliſh tenets, which could originate only in the madneſs of enthuſiaſm. The ſtoical ſyſtem, beautiful and noble as it is in a general view, abounds with blemiſhes

blemiſhes which have almoſt rendered it contemptible. It may, indeed, be ſaid, in vindication of them, that they have a tendency to raiſe and ſtrengthen human nature; while the errors of many other ſyſtems tend only to indulge its paſſions, and to increaſe its infirmity.

I ſhall preſent my reader with a few extracts from the admirable Enchiridion; diveſting them of the abſurd doctrines, and retaining only what is really practicable and intereſting to mankind at large, independently of any philoſophical ſyſtem. The paſſages are well known to the learned, to whoſe notice it would be ſuperfluous to addreſs them. They are more particularly intended for the uſe of the young; and of thoſe who, from their engagements in active or commercial life, have not time for the ſtudy of Epictetus. Readers of this deſcription will, I hope, find them not only very curious, but uſeful ſpecimens of heathen wiſdom. I ſhall tranſcribe the few paſſages which the limits of my paper will admit, from the tranſlation of a lady, who has long done honour to her ſex, and to Engliſh literature.

"Require not things to happen as you wiſh; but wiſh them to happen as they do happen, and you will go on well.

"Remember that you muſt behave in life as at an entertainment. Is any thing brought round to you? Put out your hand and take your ſhare with moderation. Does it paſs by you? Do not ſtop it. Is it not yet come? Do not ſtretch forth your deſire towards it, but wait till it reaches you. Thus do with regard to children, to a wife, to public poſts, to riches; and you will be ſome time or other a worthy partner of the feaſts of the gods.

"Remember that you are an actor in a drama, of ſuch kind as the author pleaſes to make it. If ſhort, of a ſhort one; if long, of a long one. If it be his pleaſure you ſhould act a poor man, a cripple, a governor, or a private perſon, ſee that you act it naturally. For this is your buſineſs, to act well the character aſſigned you. To chuſe it, is another's.

"If you have an earneſt deſire of attaining to philoſophy, prepare yourſelf from the very firſt to be laughed

laughed at, to be sneered by the multitude, to hear them say, "he is returned to us a philosopher all at once," and, "whence this supercilious look?" Now, for your part, do not have a supercilious look indeed; but still keep steadily to those things which appear best to you, as one appointed by God to this station. For remember, if you adhere to the same point, those very persons who at first ridiculed, will afterwards admire you; but if you are conquered by them, you will incur a double ridicule.

"When a neighbour's boy has had a slight accident, broken a cup, for instance, we are presently ready to say, "These are things that will happen." Be assured then, that when your own cup likewise is broken, you ought to be affected just as when another's cup is broken. Transfer this in like manner to other things. Is the child or wife of another dead? There is no one who would not say, "This is an accident to which human nature is liable." But if any one's own child happens to die, it is presently, "Alas, how wretched am I?" But it should be remembered, how we are affected in hearing the same thing concerning others.

"If a person had delivered up your body to any one whom he had met in the way, you would certainly be angry. And do you feel no shame in delivering up your own mind to be disconcerted and confounded by any one who happens to give you ill language?

"Duties are universally measured by relations. Is any one a father? In this are implied, as due, taking care of him, submitting to him in all things, patiently receiving his reproaches, his correction. But he is a bad father. Is your natural tie then to a good father? No: but to a father. Is a brother unjust? Well: preserve your own situation towards him; consider not what he does, but what you are to do. In this manner you will find, from the idea of a neighbour, a citizen, a general, the corresponding duties, if you accustom yourselves to contemplate the several relations.

"It is incumbent on every one to offer libations and sacrifices conformably to the customs of his country, with purity, and not in a slovenly manner, nor negligently, nor beyond his ability.

"Immediately

"Immediately prescribe some character and form of behaviour to yourself, which you may preserve, both alone and in company.

"We must not discourse on any of the common subjects, of gladiators, or horse-races, or athletic champions, or feasts, the vulgar topics of conversation; but principally not of men, so as either to blame, or praise, or make comparisons. If you are able, by your own conversation, bring over that of your company to proper subjects; but, if you happen to be taken among persons of ideas totally different from yours, be silent.

"Let not your laughter be much, nor on many occasions, nor profuse. Avoid swearing, if possible, altogether; if not, as far as you are able.

"Avoid public and vulgar entertainments: but, if ever an occasion calls you to them, keep your attention upon the stretch, that you may not imperceptibly slide into vulgar manners. For be assured, that if a person be ever so sound himself, yet if his companion be infected, he who converses with him will be infected likewise.

"Before marriage preserve yourself pure; but do not, therefore, be troublesome, and full of reproofs, to those who are licentious, nor frequently boast that you yourself are not.

"If any person tells you, that such a person speaks ill of you, do not make excuses about what is said of you, but answer; "He does not know my other faults, else he would not have mentioned only these."

"In parties of conversation, avoid a frequent and excessive mention of your own actions and dangers; for, however agreeable it may be to yourself to mention the risques you have run, it is not equally agreeable to others to hear your adventures. Avoid likewise an endeavour to excite laughter; for this is a slippery point, which may throw you into vulgar manners; and besides, may be apt to lessen you in the esteem of your acquaintance. Approaches to indecent discourse are likewise dangerous. Whenever, therefore, any thing of this sort happens, if there be a proper opportunity, rebuke him who makes advances that way; or, at least, by silence and blushing,

bluſhing, and a forbidding look, ſhew yourſelf diſpleaſed by ſuch talk.

" If you are ſtruck by the appearance of any promiſed pleaſure, guard yourſelf againſt being hurried away by it; but let the affair wait your leiſure, and procure yourſelf ſome delay. Then bring to your mind both points of time; that in which you ſhall enjoy the pleaſure, and that in which you will repent and reproach yourſelf, after you have enjoyed it: and ſet before you, in oppoſition to theſe, how you will rejoice and applaud yourſelf if you abſtain. And even, though it ſhould appear to you a ſeaſonable gratification, take heed, that its enticing, and agreeable and attractive force, may not ſubdue you; but ſet in oppoſition to this, how much better it is, to be conſcious of having gained ſo great a victory.

" When you do any thing from a clear judgment that it ought to be done, never ſhun the being ſeen to do it, even though the world ſhould make a wrong ſuppoſition about it; for, if you do not act right, ſhun the action itſelf; but, if you do, why are you afraid of thoſe who cenſure you wrongly?

" If you have aſſumed any character above your ſtrength, you have both made an ill figure in that, and quitted one which you might have ſupported.

" Women, from fourteen years old, are flattered with the title of miſtreſſes by the men. Therefore, perceiving that they are regarded only as qualified to give the men pleaſure, they begin to adorn themſelves; and in that to place all their hopes. It is worth while, therefore, to fix our attention on making them ſenſible, that they are eſteemed for nothing elſe, but the appearance of a decent, and modeſt, and diſcreet behaviour.

" It is a mark of want of genius, to ſpend much time in things relating to the body; as to be long in our exerciſes, in eating and drinking. Theſe ſhould be done incidentally and ſlightly; and our whole attention be engaged in the care of the underſtanding.

" Never call yourſelf a philoſopher, nor talk a great deal among the unlearned about theorems; but act conformably to them. Thus, at entertainments, do not talk how perſons ought to eat; but eat as you ought.

There is great danger in immediately throwing out what you have not digeſted. And if any one tells you, that you know nothing, and you are not nettled at it, then you may be ſure that you have begun your buſineſs.

" Sheep do not produce the graſs, to ſhow how much they have eaten; but, inwardly digeſting their food, they outwardly produce wool and milk. Thus, therefore, do you likewiſe, not ſhew theorems to the unlearned, but the actions produced by them, after they have been digeſted.

" The condition and characteriſtic of a vulgar perſon are, that he never expects either benefit or hurt from himſelf; but from externals. The condition and characteriſtic of a philoſopher are, that he expects all hurt and benefit from himſelf.

" Whatever rules you have deliberately propoſed to yourſelf for the conduct of life, abide by them as ſo many laws, and as if you would be guilty of impiety in tranſgreſſing any of them; and do not regard what any one ſays of you, for this, after all, is no concern of yours. How long will you defer to think yourſelf worthy of the nobleſt improvements, and in no inſtance to tranſgreſs the diſtinctions of reaſon? You are no longer a boy, but a grown man. If, therefore, you will be negligent and ſlothful, and always add procraſtination to procraſtination, purpoſe to purpoſe, and fix day after day, in which you will attend to yourſelf, you will inſenſibly continue without proficiency; and living and dying, preſevere in being one of the vulgar. This inſtant then, think yourſelf worthy of living as a man grown up, and a proficient. Let whatever appears to be the beſt, be to you an inviolable law. And if any inſtance of pain or pleaſure, or glory or diſgrace, be ſet before you, remember that now is the combat, now the olympiad comes on, nor can it be put off; and that, by once being worſted and giving way, proficiency is loſt; or, by the contrary, preſerved. Thus Socrates became perfect, improving himſelf by every thing, attending to nothing but reaſon. And, though you are not yet a Socrates, you ought, however, to live as one deſirous of becoming a Socrates.

" Upon all occaſions we ought to have this ſaying

of

of Socrates at hand, " O Crito, if it thus pleaſes the gods, thus let it be! Anytus and Melitus may kill me indeed, but hurt me they cannot."

The conferences of Epictetus, from which, indeed, the manual is in great meaſure collected, quaint as they appear, abound with pithy remarks; ſuch as ſuggeſt much more to the mind of a reflecting reader than meets the ear. The gold, however, as it happens in the richeſt mines, is ſurrounded with much droſs. The uncouth manner in which the conferences appear in a tranſlation, however excellent, has deterred many from peruſing them, who would have found their perſeverance amply rewarded. I cannot, therefore, help wiſhing, for the ſake of liberal and ſtudious young men, that all the valuable matter were extracted, and preſented to their view, with accuracy; but, at the ſame time, with all the ornaments of an elegant and flowing diction. I ſhould, indeed, think it an excellent mode of improving the minds and morals of thoſe who are in the courſe of their education, if ſome one paſſage, like thoſe cited above, were ſelected as a text or ſubject on which the preceptor might expatiate. For, next to the ſcriptures themſelves, the writings of the ſtoics contribute moſt to raiſe and reſcue human nature from the humiliation and wretchedneſs into which it is prone to fall, by natural degeneracy, inherent weakneſs, and acquired corruption. They operate on the mind like thoſe medicines on the body which are called bracers, or corroboratives; and ſurely that philoſophy ought to be encouraged by every moraliſt and ſtateſman, which adds nerves to virtue, and gives ſtability to empire.

No. CVI. ON SWEETNESS AND DELICACY OF STYLE.

AS there is in ſome flowers an exquiſite ſcent, and in ſome fruits a delicious flavour, to expreſs which no language has a name, ſo there is in ſtyle a ſweetneſs

and a delicacy which eludes deſcription, and can only be perceived by the ſenſibility of taſte.

But though it may be difficult to analyſe this agreeable quality, or to teach a writer how to infuſe it into his works, yet it is by no means equally arduous to point out a few authors, in whom both the obſervations of others, and our own feelings, have diſcovered it. This, indeed, is the only method of communicating it; and though it is not to be taught by didactic and formal precepts, it may be acquired by the contagious influence of a captivating example.

Sweetneſs is chiefly to be found in Lyric poetry; but is by no means confined to it. Though Voſſius is of opinion, that ſweetneſs is peculiar to it, as gravity to the epic, ſimplicity to the paſtoral, ſoftneſs to the elegiac, jocularity to the comic, pathos to the tragic, bitterneſs to the ſatyric, and pungency to the epigrammatic. I rather think, that they all admit, on ſome occaſions, ſomething of this quality. Homer, who will furniſh models of every ſtyle, often mixes, among his ruder beauties, a delicate ſweetneſs of diction, which, beſides its own inherent power of pleaſing, embelliſhes all the rougher parts by the power of contraſt.

Theocritus is all ſweetneſs; and if a reader, with a good ear, ſhould not underſtand the ſweet bard of Syracuſe, he might ſtill be delighted with the delicious honey of the doric dialect.

Many of the little, but elegant, compoſitions in the anthologiæ, owe all their excellence to the ſelection of words, which convey enchanting muſic to the ear. They ſeem, indeed, to trickle like liquid honey from the honeycomb, and this without any affectation in the writers; for ſuch are the peculiar beauties of the Greek language, that it is difficult to write on ſubjects connected with pleaſure, love, and beauty, without uſing ſuch expreſſions as, beſides their real meaning, excite an idea of ſweetneſs, ſimilar to the objects repreſented.

Sweetneſs is the peculiar excellence of the joyous bard of Teos. The bacchanalian ſongs of modern times partake very little of thoſe delicate charms which diſtinguiſh a ſtyle truly anacreontic. It does not indeed appear,

appear, that the modern bacchanals have thought it poſſible that their joys ſhould admit of delicacy. The ſongs, therefore, which have been written to enliven and ſtimulate their mirth, have uſually been of a coarſer kind, and ſuch as neceſſarily excluded ſweetneſs of compoſition. They ſeem to have conſidered a Bacchus as he is rudely repreſented on a ſign-poſt, and not as he is deſcribed by the poets and ſculptors of antiquity, a moſt graceful and elegant figure. Anacreon, after all, like the Greek epigrammatiſts, muſt be acknowledged to owe much of his ſweetneſs to a language, which cannot be otherwiſe than ſweet on certain ſubjects, without unnatural violence.

The Latin language, though ſuſceptible of peculiar delicacy, is certainly leſs capable of ſweetneſs than the dialect of Athens, Ionia, and Doris. But ſtill there are many authors in it, who have derived much of the power of pleaſing the human race, during near twenty centuries, from the ſingular ſweetneſs of their ſtyle.

Catullus, I believe, deſerves to be mentioned among the firſt of thoſe who have emulated the Greeks in their diſtinguiſhed excellence. Few books would have been better calculated to give boys a true taſte for ſweet compoſition, if the decency of the poet's ſentiments had been equal to the delicacy of his ſtyle.

Horace was a very Proteus in the circumſtance of a verſatile and variegated diction. His odes abound with ſtanzas, and his other works with heroic verſes, which evidently prove, that if he had choſen to vie with Virgil in ſtrength and dignity, he would have approached his rival. But he was a man of pleaſure, and his favourite ſtyle is that in which he celebrates love and wine. In this there is a remarkable ſweetneſs; and I know not whether the *curioſa felicitas*, or that charm of his writings, which reſulted from ſtudy and happineſs united, may not be ſaid to conſiſt in ſweetneſs and delicacy. Such is the delightful ſweetneſs of the ninth ode of the fourth book, and the fourth of the third, that all readers have been charmed with them; and Julius Scaliger, a very warm critic, has aſſerted, that he had rather be the author of them than of all Pindar's odes, or than be elevated to the rank of a monarch.

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It is, I think, certain, that many of the odes of Horace, and many of the works of other poets of equal fame, have delighted mankind from one generation to another, far leſs by their ſentiments than by thoſe congenial beauties, a ſweetneſs of language, a delicate choice of words, and a well modulated collocation.

The modeſt bard of Mantua indiſputably owes his influence over the human mind, to his talent in attempering, in a moſt judicious union, ſoftneſs, ſweetneſs, and the niceſt delicacy, with the moſt majeſtic grandeur.

Among the proſe writers of Greece and Rome, every reader of taſte will immediately obſerve, that Herodotus and Xenophon, Cæſar and Cicero, claim the firſt place in the excellence of a ſweet ſtyle. The two Plinies and Paterculus, have a conſiderable ſhare of it. Thucydides, Salluſt, and Tacitus, are too fond of auſterity to admit any great portion of ſweetneſs.

Many of the modern Latin poets have diſtinguiſhed themſelves by the ſweetneſs of their verſe. Some of them have, however, carried it to exceſs, and have written in the worſt manner of Grotius, Joannes Secundus, and Bonifonius. Sweetneſs ought to be diſtinguiſhed from luſciouſneſs; the one affects us with the ſenſations durably agreeable; the other quickly cloys and palls the appetite.

The eminent French writers, who certainly poſſeſs taſte, have diſplayed a remarkable ſweetneſs of ſtyle. The Italians can ſcarcely compoſe without diſplaying it. He who has formed a taſte for this quality, will find it fully gratified in the writings of Fontaine, Metaſtaſio, and, indeed, in all the celebrated authors of France and Italy. Thoſe nations, in modern times, have been more defective in ſtrength and nerve, than in any of the ſofter qualities, the purpoſe of which is to pleaſe.

Though the French are diſpoſed to deny the Engliſh the praiſe of taſte, I cannot help thinking, that we have writers who can rival them in their pretenſions to every excellence which can adorn compoſition. Our Addiſon, like ſome of the moſt celebrated antients, poſſeſſes that ſweetneſs, that delicacy, and that grace, which is formed to pleaſe the human mind, under all

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the revolutions of time, of faſhion, and of capricious taſte. It is not only the excellent matter which produces the effect of gently compoſing our paſſions while we are reading Addiſon; but it is alſo that ſweet ſtyle, which cannot be read and taſted without communicating to the mind ſomething of its own equability. Sir William Temple was, indeed, the model of Addiſon, and he is remarkable for the ſweetneſs of his ſtyle, eſpecially if he is compared with the writers of his own time.

All our eminent poets have judiciouſly mingled ſweetneſs with ſtrength, and grace with dignity. Waller has uſually obtained the praiſe of ſweetneſs; but he has been greatly exceeded by his ſucceſſors in this and every other ſpecies of poetry. If that ſort of genius which conſtitutes a Homer, a Shakeſpeare, a Milton, has not been common among us; yet the ſubordinate ſpecies which is diſplayed in elegant mediocrity, and in what we call pretty and pleaſing opuſcula, has been no where more abundant.

It appears to me, that the later writers of proſe have rather affected the maſculine and nervous, than the ſweet and graceful. The late Mr. Harris is, indeed, an exception; for he collected the pureſt honey from the flowers of Attica. The author of Fitzoſborne's letters has exhibited both grace and ſweetneſs; and I wiſh they were not ſometimes injured by verboſity. Johnſon, Hawkeſworth, Robertſon, are chiefly admired for ſtrength and force. Hume has now and then diſplayed ſomething of Addiſonian ſweetneſs in a few of his moral eſſays. It is to be wiſhed he had diſplayed alſo ſomething of the Addiſonian goodneſs of heart. The Warburtonian ſchool, as Hume called it, though it has produced ingenious and nervous writers, cannot boaſt either of ſweetneſs or gracefulneſs. It has delighted much in violent controverſy and arbitrary dictation, both of which uſually bid defiance to the Graces, and prefer bitterneſs and acrimony to ſweetneſs.

Though it may not be eaſy to define the whole of that, whatever it is, which conſtitutes ſweetneſs of ſtyle, yet it is by no means difficult to diſcover one or two circumſtances which are highly conducive to it. It is, indeed,

indeed, obvious to obſerve, that the frequent uſe of liquid letters, and of labials combined with ſyllables, conſiſting of vowels with few conſonants, contributes greatly to ſweeten the diction. But ſo nice a point is real excellence, that the ſmalleſt exceſs or affectation of any particular beauty will totally deſtroy all its agreeable effect. It muſt reſult from nature, cultivated, indeed, but not too cloſely confined and directed, by art. Alliteration is conducive to ſweetneſs, and is a figure frequently uſed by the beſt writers, antient and modern. Uſed with caution it cannot fail to pleaſe; but the cauſe of the pleaſure ſhould be latent. When this figure obtrudes itſelf too often, and in exceſs, as it does in ſeveral modern writers, it loſes all its grace, and the reader reſents and loaths the paltry artifice of a writer who depends on ſo poor a claim to applauſe. This, indeed, and all other ornaments, are to be uſed, as it has been obſerved, like ſalt at a meal, which agreeably ſeaſons every diſh when mixed in moderation, but which would ſpoil the whole, if it were rendered the predominant ingredient in the repaſt.

No. CVII. HINTS TO THOSE WHO ARE DESIGNED FOR THE PROFESSION OF PHYSIC.

IT was always a part of my deſign, in theſe papers, to ſuggeſt a few hints of advice to young perſons who are juſt entering on any of the liberal profeſſions; not, indeed, with a preſumptuous intention to direct them in a technical or ſcientific practice, but merely to give them ſome general ideas; which may render their views more liberal, and their minds more generous, or arm them with ſome uſeful precautions. I remember too well the impertinence of the ſophiſt who read a lecture to Hannibal on the art of war, to think of inſtructing any perſons in the peculiar or mechanical art and ſcience, which they have made the ſtudy of their lives. But there are certain univerſal truths which men, attached to a particular purſuit, ſometimes overlook.

look. There is also a certain enlargement of mind, which is lost in the narrow habits and confined views of those who take an active part in a lucrative profession. He who surveys life in an extensive prospect, may see a variety of magnificent objects which escape the eye, which is constantly fixed on a few single circumstances, and confined within a narrow circle. It is the business of the moralist to inspect every part of human life, to endeavour to correct its errors, and promote all the excellence and happiness of which it is capable.

It has been justly remarked, that they who enter on the profession of medicine, in any of its branches, have commonly depended for success, rather on the cultivation of the graces than the sciences. And it is certain, that many persons whose solid attainments were very moderate, have run away with the greatest share of wealth and popularity, with few other recommendations, than a fine person, a shewy dress, a singular equipage, and an undaunted effrontery.

But since internal satisfaction, a consciousness of having done all that was possible to prepare for a profession, and of having pretended to no more than we are able to perform, is a surer source of happiness than the applause, and even the guineas of the ignorant multitude; I advise every pupil, who values substantial happiness more than the phantom of it, to devote the first period of his life to a very serious pursuit of every part of knowledge which contributes to give him, not only a practical, but a theoretical skill in his profession; not only the contracted ideas of a mercenary practitioner, but the comprehensive sentiments of a student in philosophy.

The foundation should be laid in an education truly liberal. It is really lamentable to observe the extreme ignorance of those among medical practitioners, who are applied to in the first instance, and who constitute the most numerous class. They are taken from a writing-school, or perhaps a grammar-school, at the age of fourteen, and bound apprentices. They have usually acquired a good hand-writing; but their knowledge of the classics is seldom worth mentioning; and, upon the whole, their education may be said to be about equal

to that of a pauper in a parish charity school. Their business is to stand behind the counter, and compound medicines by the prescriptions of the doctor. These are usually in Latin, written very badly, and full of affected abbreviations. They are, indeed, often so ænigmatical, that nothing less than the sagacity of an Oedipus can resolve their difficulties. The poor lad, if he has time, will toil at his dictionary, where, however, he often toils in vain; but if he has not time, which is usually the case, he takes the most expeditious method of doing business. He is ashamed to confess his ignorance, and therefore puts up any medicine which his conjecture suggests; the phial is wrapt up, dispatched with all expedition, and the patient poisoned.

After having spent seven years in a shop pounding drugs and spreading plasters; and after having acquired a little paltry portion of mechanical knowledge by constant habit, he is dismissed as complete; and goes into the country a bold professor of chirurgery and pharmacy. With a smart dress, an unblushing countenance, and a voluble tongue, he is sure of success, and bids defiance to all the learning in the world. In his own opinion he is another Hippocrates or Heberden; and, indeed, he is an object of real wonder to the country people; for he collects a few hard words from his dictionary, which he utters with great gravity among gossips and farmers, who consider him as a very learned man, as well as prodigiously clever in his profession. Those who could bear witness against his skill, are all secured and silenced, in the church-yard.

I assert, that a knowledge of Greek as well as Latin is really necessary to the apothecary, if he would perform his business with that accuracy which is certainly required in so important an employment. A boy, destined to this employment, should by no means leave his school till the age of sixteen or seventeen. The knowledge of the learned languages, acquired before that time, is merely elementary; it is only of use as it leads to farther improvement in the languages. It cannot qualify for any profession, much less for the apothecaries, the names of whose instruments, medi-

cines,

cines, and operations, are, for the moſt part, either wholly Greek, or of Greek extraction.

But, indeed, if he wiſhes to raiſe his profeſſion above the level of an empiric, or a farrier, he ſhould acquire a liberal education for its own ſake, independently of its uſe in a mercenary view; for the ſake of poliſhing his mind, and elevating his ſentiments. With a liberal education and an extenſive practice, he is in fact a phyſician, though called an apothecary; and though he ſhould neither have purchaſed a diploma, nor have earned a regular degree by ſpending his time, money, and health, in an Engliſh univerſity, he is a gentleman; and the peculiar utility of his employments, when judiciouſly and humanely conducted, entitle him to the company and converſation of all who deſerve that diſtinction.

There never was an age in which they who intend to ſupport the dignified character of graduated phyſicians, had better opportunities for improvement in phyſiology. Lectures, as well as books, in anatomy, chemiſtry, and every part of ſcience and natural philoſophy, never more abounded. Let the ſtudent devote himſelf to theſe with long and ſerious application, and depend more upon them, than on the caprice of faſhion, or any ſingularity in his chariot and livery. A popular phyſician in a great capital, and indeed any where, is a very important member of ſociety, conſidered merely in a political view. The lives, limbs, health, and ſpirits, of a very great part of the ſubjects of a kingdom, depend upon his ſkill and honeſty. A man who undertakes this office, and recommends himſelf by addreſs and artifice, without qualifying himſelf with every preparatory knowledge, and who abuſes the confidence of thoſe who fly to him as to a guardian angel, in the deepeſt diſtreſs, has very little claim to the title of an honeſt man; and deſerves to be ſtigmatized and puniſhed with the worſt of villains, and the vileſt of ſharpers.

It has been obſerved, and regretted, that ſome individuals in this liberal profeſſion have exhibited ſuch an attention to intereſt, as is incompatible with the common feelings of humanity. Such perſons are their own enemies; for no gratifications of ſordid avarice can equal the delicious ſenſations of him, who delights in exerciſing

exerciſing his ſkill, in diffuſing joy through the haunts of miſery, and in relieving the ſick, the maimed, the halt, and the blind.

There is, indeed, ſomething godlike in the medical profeſſion, when it is humanely and diſintereſtedly exerciſed. Every one, it is true, ought to pay that regard to intereſt, which prudence, and a love of his own family demand; but he who alſo delights in relieving, from the ſatisfactions of ſympathy and a ſenſe of duty, may be ſaid to reſemble the great model of every perfection, Jeſus Chriſt, who went about doing good, and healing all manner of ſickneſs and diſeaſes among the people.

No. CVIII. THE COMPLAINTS AGAINST MODERN LITERATURE PROBABLY ILL-FOUNDED.

TO complain of the preſent, and to praiſe the paſt, has ſo long been the favourite topic of diſappointment, or of ignorance, that every ſtricture on the degeneracy of the times is looked upon as the effuſion of ill-nature, or the reſult of ſuperficial obſervation: but the abſurdity of declamatory invective, ought not to preclude the cool remarks of truth, reaſon, and experience.

The practice of vice, or virtue, has indeed varied at different periods, rather in the mode, than in the degree; but the ſtate of literature has ſuffered more violent revolutions; it has ſometimes ſhone with the brighteſt luſtre, and at others has been totally overſhadowed with the darkneſs of barbariſm.

To review the ſtate of learning from the earlieſt periods, and to inveſtigate the cauſes of its fluctuation, is a taſk that requires much labour, ſagacity, and erudition. More ſuperficial enquiries will, however, ſuffice to examine the juſtice of the charge of literary degeneracy in the preſent age, and, if it be well founded, to diſcover the cauſes of it.

It has been obſerved by an ingenious writer, that as every age has been marked by ſome peculiarity, from which

which it has derived its characteriſtic appellation; ſo the preſent, were it to be diſtinguiſhed by a name from its moſt prevalent humour, might be called, *the age of authors*. Of late years, almoſt every man has felt an ambition of appearing in print, from the voluminous lexicographer, down to the ſcribbler, in a pamphlet or a newſpaper. It is, indeed, natural to ſuppoſe, that of a great number of competitors, ſome would reach the prize; and that the univerſal combination of intellects would effect ſome ſtupendous work, which ſhould exceed all the productions of our predeceſſors, and demand the admiration of the lateſt poſterity. It has, however, been obſerved, that the learning of the preſent age is not deep, though diffuſive; and that its productions are not excellent, though numerous.

The multiplicity of compoſitions is an argument of their haſty production; and haſtineſs is, at leaſt, a preſumptive proof of their want of merit. In this point, the literary and the natural world reſemble each other. The productions of nature, whether vegetable or animal, as they are either of a ſlow or ſpeedy growth, are known to be durable or tranſitory, ſolid or unſubſtantial. The oak and the elephant are long before they attain perfection, but are ſtill longer before they decay; while the butterfly and the floweret periſh as they ariſe, almoſt within a diurnal revolution of the ſun. The works of Virgil coſt him much time and labour; but they have exiſted near two thouſand years univerſally admired, while the compoſitions of that poet, who boaſted he could write two or three hundred verſes while he ſtood on one leg, were loſt in a ſpace almoſt as ſhort as that in which they were produced.

But the haſty formation of literary works in modern times, is not a greater obſtacle to their excellence, than the mercenary motives of their authors. The office of inſtructing mankind in morality, and of informing them in ſcience, was once reſerved for thoſe alone who were particularly adapted to the taſk by the impulſes of genius, by peculiar opportunities, and by ſingular application. In theſe times, however, the profeſſion of an author is become a lucrative employment, and is practiſed rather by thoſe who feel the inconvenience of hunger,

hunger, than by thoſe who are ſtimulated with the hope of immortality. But it is a known truth, that avarice contracts the mind, and renders it incapable of elevated ſentiments and generous enterprizes. It ceaſes therefore to be matter of wonder, that works are deſtitute of ſpirit, when they proceed not from the noble ardour inſpired by the love of fame, but from the frigid incitements of the love of money.

The depraved taſte of readers is another cauſe of the degeneracy of writers. They who write for the public, muſt gratify the taſte of the public. In vain are their compoſitions formed on the model of the beſt writers, and regulated by the precepts of the moſt judicious critics, if they conform not to the popular caprice, and the miſtaken judgment of the vulgar. In an age when the taſte for reading is univerſal, many works, contemptible both in deſign and execution, will be received by ſome readers, with diſtinguiſhed applauſe. The want of the merits of juſt reaſoning and pure language, is with the greater part, the half-learned and the ignorant, no objection. In truth, unconnected thoughts, and ſuperficial declamation, are congenial to minds unaccuſtomed to accurate thinking, and inſenſible of the charms of finiſhed excellence. Hence writers, of acknowledged abilities and learning, have been known, when they aimed at popularity, to relinquiſh real excellence, and adopt a falſe taſte, in oppoſition to their own judgment.

After all, it may not perhaps be abſurd, to attribute many of the complaints againſt the preſent ſtate of letters to ignorance, envy and caprice. In every department of literature, in the gay regions of fancy, and in the depths of philoſophy and ſcience, many authors there are of this age and nation, who have acquired an illuſtrious reputation by deſerving it: and if they want that originality of thought and ſolidity of learning, which mark ſome of the productions of our firſt writers, yet have they a force, elegance, and correctneſs of ſtyle, unknown to their predeceſſors.

No.

No. CIX. ON THE CAUSES AND FOLLY OF DISSENTIONS IN A COUNTRY NEIGHBOURHOOD.

IT ſeems extraordinary, that with all our pretenſions to the ſocial affections and to chriſtianity, there are few country towns or villages, in which the families, which are reckoned genteel by the right of fortune, and of ſelf-eſtimation, live upon terms of cordial and ſincere friendſhip. One might, I believe, venture to go farther, and to aſſert, that there are few where a general enmity and diſlike does not lurk, under the formality of ceremonious viſits, and civil ſalutation.

The foundation of all the uneaſineſs is a fooliſh pride, which, though it was not made for ſo weak a creature as man, yet adheres ſo cloſely to him, that he can ſeldom diveſt himſelf of it, without ſuch an effort as few minds are able to make. Philoſophy is vainly applied; for few are prouder than philoſophers. Religion only can effectually eradicate a vice ſo deeply rooted; that amiable religion, which teaches us to love our neighbours as ourſelves; and which has informed us of a truth which experience abundantly confirms, that from pride only cometh contention.

The moſt trifling diſtinction or appearance of ſuperiority, is ſure to excite all the heart-burnings of ſecret envy and jealouſy. Inſtead of rejoicing at any fortunate event which contributes to the happineſs of a neighbour, the greater part ſecretly repine at it, and endeavour to leſſen the ſatisfaction it might afford, by diſſeminating ſome mortifying ſurmiſe or inſinuation. Indeed, the fortunate perſon ſometimes deſerves ſome humiliation; for as his neighbours are endeavouring to lower him to their own level, he, on the other hand, oſtentatiouſly diſplays his ſuperiority, and labours to depreſs them below their due rank, that his own elevation may be more conſpicuous. It would be entertaining to behold

behold the little contrivances which the petty gentry invent for the purpoſe of eclipſing each other, if there were not always ſomething of a malignity which diſguſts and hurts the mind of an humane man. The rivalry is by no means of an amicable ſort; and though the parties are wonderfully civil when they meet, they often hate each other with the greateſt inveteracy. Nothing would, indeed, give them greater pleaſure, than to hear of each others loſſes or ruin, though they would not fail to viſit on the occaſion, and to ſympathiſe in the politeſt and moſt approved faſhion.

Scandal, indeed, who has long reigned with arbitrary ſway in country towns, is uſually the cauſe of all that latent hatred which poiſons the happineſs of families, whoſe birth or fortune has placed them in the ſame neighbourhood; and who, enjoying plenty, might alſo enjoy peace, if they could prevail upon themſelves to turn a deaf ear to the tale-bearer. But ſuch is the perverſeneſs or malignity of many, that though they have themſelves but juſt ſuffered from the falſe reports of ſlanderers, they liſten, with delight, to the next whiſper, that flies like the arrow in the dark, and wounds a neighbour's reputation. If any favourable report begins to prevail, it is with difficulty admitted; it is doubted, contradicted, or extenuated. But there is no lie ſo improbably falſe, ſo little like the truth, but it will be joyfully received and believed without examination, ſo long as it tends to lower an object of envy in the eſteem of a neighbourhood, to injure the intereſt of a rival in vanity, or to wound the heart of him whom we hate, only becauſe we feel the weight of his real ſuperiority.

It is to be wiſhed, that people would conſider from how contemptible a ſource moſt of thoſe calamities originate, which induce neighbours to entertain a bad opinion of each other, and in conſequence, to live in a ſtate of conſtant, though ſecret enmity. They uſually come from domeſtic ſervants, who, in revenge for a juſt reprimand, or from the wickedneſs of an ungrateful heart, delight in diſſeminating the moſt cruel tales without the ſmalleſt foundation in reality. Or, ſuppoſing ſomething ſimilar to the calumny did happen

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in a neighbour's houſe, it is ſo diſguiſed, altered, and exaggerated, by the time it has gone from the top of the town to the bottom, that what was, in truth, no more than a trifle ſcarcely worth attention, becomes a charge of a moſt atrocious and injurious kind, when it has been toſſed from tongue to tongue. The vileſt menial ſhall utter a lie, in the meaneſt ſhop of the moſt paltry town; and, in the ſpace of half an hour, it ſhall be republiſhed with additions and embelliſhments, as a known fact, by the Lady of the Manor.

The petty officers and diſtinctions of church-wardens, ſurveyors, mayors, lords of the manor, commiſſioners of turnpike roads, and ſimilar rural dignities, do indeed often fill their poſſeſſors, and their ladies, with ſo high a ſenſe of their own importance, and at the ſame time excite ſo much envy in the little minds which aſpire at ſuch little honours, that, in proportion as the great perſonage advances in the path of glory, he is often obliged to relinquiſh the comforts of good neighbourhood. It is not, indeed, to be wondered at, if thoſe who have had little or no education, and whoſe views have been confined to horſes, dogs, and the affairs of a veſtry and a court-leet, ſhould value themſelves too much on petty diſtinction; and ſhould ſuppoſe the title of Eſquire, Lord of the Manor, or Juſtice of Peace, ſuch honours as may juſtify them in treating others with contumely. Neither is it wonderful, that they who have never wandered beyond the limits of their native pariſh, ſhould ſurvey ſuch diſtinctions with an envious eye. All men ought, indeed, to aſpire at diſtinction, as it may lead them to aſpire at uſefulneſs and virtue; but it is certainly deſirable, for the ſake of tranquillity, that envy and malice ſhould not be mixed with laudable emulation.

But there are other cauſes beſides the love of ſcandal and the gratification of vanity, which powerfully operate in interrupting the harmony of a good neighbourhood. Avarice is the occaſion of many and indeterminable diſagreements. In what part of the country can we fix our reſidence, where ſome of the clergy are not objects of diſlike, becauſe a regard to their wives and children, whoſe bread depends upon their lives, induces them

them to insist on those dues which the laws have allowed them. The clergyman in the most desert parts of the country, is usually a man of learning, and of a polite mind, who might diffuse a taste for elegant and improving conversation; but he is excluded from the society of his parishioners, because he makes a just claim upon their property. The most shocking calumnies are propagated against him and his family; every thing is done which can mortify and distress him, and he is frequently involved for life by the farmers, and a pettifogger at their head, in vexatious and expensive litigation. He who preaches peace, and who might soften, by the influence of polished manners, the remains of brutality among his savage and narrow-minded neighbours, is hunted by them till he is forced to take refuge in the lonely retreat of his parsonage.

The various meetings which are necessary to conduct parish, and other public business in the country, are often productive of violent animosities. An opposition formed at a vestry, or a turnpike meeting, is sometimes carried on with more acrimony than in the House of Commons. It would not be so lamentable, if the consequences of the dispute terminated at the time and place in which it arose; but it usually happens, that if the gentlemen have disagreed in the vestry, the ladies, at the next tea-drinking, put on sullen looks, and commence a secret attack on each others persons, dress, character and conduct. Hostilities, which owe their rise to a difference in opinion concerning the mending of a road, or the repairing of a steeple, are carried on under the cover of external civility, and continue from generation to generation.

It would be a very valuable point gained, if we could prevail on the many thousands, who, with all the external means of happiness, lead uncomfortable lives from the dissentions of their neighbourhood, to consider duly the importance of a friendly intercourse with those in whose vicinity they have been placed by Providence. They may be confidently assured, that no pleasure arising from scandal, from petty distinctions, from trifling matters of interest, or from influence over parish or county meetings, can be compared to the satisfaction

ſatisfaction of living in love, and in a conſtant interchange of thoſe good offices which alleviate adverſity, and give to proſperity its ſweeteſt enjoyments. The qualities indiſpenſably neceſſary to the accompliſhment of this deſireable purpoſe, are benevolence and humility.

No. CX. THE IMPRUDENCE OF AN EARLY ATTACHMENT TO ACTING PLAYS.

IN A LETTER.

AS I was ſauntering, a few days ago, on one of the public walks, I could not help particularly remarking a young man, whoſe dreſs ſhewed marks of a ſhabby gentility, and whoſe countenance wore the aſpect of a ſettled melancholy.

The appearance of wretchedneſs, in whatever ſituation, is always ſufficient to awaken curioſity, I felt myſelf irreſiſtibly impelled to enquire into the hiſtory of a perſon who ſeemed to be completely miſerable. After having walked a conſiderable time, I perceived him to throw himſelf, in a diſconſolate attitude, on one of the ſeats of the walk. I did not neglect the opportunity; but ſeating myſelf by his ſide, prevailed on him, after ſome introductory converſation, to give me his hiſtory, which he did in the following words:

"Yes, Sir," ſaid he, "though my preſent appear-
" ance may ſeem to invalidate my aſſertion, I aſſure you
" I was the ſon of one of the moſt opulent traders
" in the metropolis. I might at this time have been
" enjoying all the happineſs that affluence can beſtow;
" but now, alas! I have no where to lay my head,
" no refuge to which I can fly for comfort. I am aban-
" doned to the wide world without a friend; and one
" conſideration aggravates all my miſery—I have de-
" ſerved my ſufferings, and cannot juſtly complain."

Here he pauſed to conceal a tear which was juſt burſting from his eyes. After he had a little recovered himſelf,

himſelf, his countenance gradually grew more ſerene, and he proceeded with leſs emotion.

" When I was at the age of eleven, my father " placed me at a celebrated grammar-ſchool—there " I ſpent the happieſt days of my life. Nature, as " I was told, had given me parts; I made a rapid " progreſs in claſſical learning; all was encourage- " ment, all was hope, and all was happineſs. But, in " the midſt of my improvement, my father reſolved, " in oppoſition to the advice of my maſter, to remove " me from ſchool, and to ſettle me in his own counting- " houſe. My maſter urged, that though I might per- " haps ſucceed in a learned profeſſion, yet the vivacity " of my diſpoſition would be an obſtacle to my proſpe- " rity in a mercantile employment. My father, ſen- " ſible of the lucrative advantages of an eſtabliſhed " trade, was deaf to theſe remonſtrances; and on a " fatal day I entered into engagements to plod at the " deſk and the counter for ſeven years.

" But nature is not to be conſtrained by indentures. " Inſtead of caſting up ſums, and meaſuring ells, I em- " ployed my time in the peruſal of Shakeſpeare, in " compoſing epilogues and farces, and in diſcuſſing " the merits of every new dramatic production. In- " ſtead of ſpending my evenings in poſting accounts, " and examining my ledger, I was always attending " the performances of a Foote or a Garrick. At length, " by conſtantly frequenting the playhouſes, and mixing " with contemptible ſciolifts, who called themſelves " theatrical critics, I became ſo enamoured of the " ſtage, as to look upon dramatic entertainments as " conſtituting the moſt important buſineſs, as well as " the moſt agreeable enjoyment, of human life. The " ſhop continually reſounded with my rants, in imita- " tion of ſome favourite actor; and I went ſo far as to " treat with the purchaſers of a yard of Iriſh, with a " theatrical tone, and a dramatic action.

" I had ſo great an opinion of my own talents, that, " like the immortal Shakeſpeare, I was ambitious of " ſhining both as an actor and a writer. Accordingly " I finiſhed a comedy with great care and pains, and " preſented it to one of the managers, who returned

" it

" it upon my hands, with evident marks of contempt. " By no means dejected, I was reſolved to try my ſuc- " ceſs as an actor. But having, with great difficulty, " obtained permiſſion to ſpeak before the managers, " and a circle of their friends, who ſeemed to enjoy " my diſtreſs, I was again rejected.

" Though I could not ſucceed at the theatres, I was " reſolved to exert my abilities at ſpouting and diſ- " puting clubs. And here, indeed, I eaſily made a " conſpicuous figure; as I had the advantage of a " claſſical education, and moſt of my competitors had " no education at all. The moſt important topics of " religion, learning, and politics, I diſcuſſed with " more volubility than the graveſt prelate, the pro- " foundeſt academic, or the craftieſt ſtateſman. But I " triumphed, as it were, without an enemy, and the " facility of the conqueſt diminiſhed the pleaſure of it. " I ſoon became weary of dry argumentation, and " eagerly panted to wear the buſkin, and to mouth the " ſonorous periods of ſome tragic bard.

" It happened that I had formed a connection " with a young member of the club, whoſe genius was " entirely ſimilar to my own, and who had been en- " gaged with a ſtrolling company of players. He had " often ſolicited me to go with him on an acting tour " into the north of England; and I had as often re- " fuſed from a principle of pride. But at length, an " ardent deſire of exhibiting on the ſtage, overcame every " regard to duty, and every compunction of conſcience. " In a fatal hour (I bluſh to mention it), I embezzled " a ſum of money with which I was truſted in the " courſe of buſineſs, packed up my clothes, and ac- " companied a ſet of vagabonds, who, like myſelf, had " abandoned every reputable occupation, and devoted " themſelves to infamy and indigence, for the ſake of " enjoying the plaudits of a few ruſtics aſſembled in a " barn.

" And now commences the æra of all my miſery. " The money I had fraudulently taken, was ſoon " ſquandered away in a ſociety of thoughtleſs mortals, " who regarded not to-morrow, if they could feaſt to- " day. We were, indeed, received with applauſe;

" but

" but the audience was commonly ſo ſcanty, that the " expences of repreſentation often exceeded the re- " ceipts. In every town we were looked upon with " ſuſpicion, and treated as vagrants. We were ſome- " times reduced to ſuch extremities, by the expences " of travelling, and the loſs of acting to empty barns, " that we have wanted even food to ſupport nature. " Above charity, we could not be relieved, and deſti- " tute of credit, we could not be truſted. At length " I ſaw my folly, and after various reſolves, ſent a " friend to enquire whether my father was diſpoſed to " receive me, ſhould I return and confeſs my fault. " How, alas! was I ſtruck, when I was told in an- " ſwer, that my father died a few days ago of a broken " heart; and that his death was ſo ſudden, that he " had not time to alter his will, in which, in the firſt " rage after his diſcovery of my elopement, he had cut " me off with a ſhilling.

" It is impoſſible to give you a adequate idea of " my grief on this occaſion, and I ſhall only inform " you, that it would have proved fatal, had it not " been ſoon removed by emotions of a different kind. " During my indiſpoſition, one of the actreſſes of our " company, whoſe beauty is only exceeded by the " goodneſs of her heart, watched me with all the " anxiety of a parent, and ſoothed me under the hor- " rors of deſpair, with the ſofteſt blandiſhments of " tenderneſs. I ſoon felt a flame kindling in my " breaſt, which was anſwered with a ſympathetic " paſſion. In ſhort, I was no ſooner reſtored to health " and vigour, than I married the lovely Emily: we " have now been united near a year, and yeſterday ſhe " was ſafely delivered of twins. That ſhe is well, " thank Heaven; but, alas, the reflection, that I am " deſtitute of all the means that can give her eaſe, or " provide for her offspring, ſharpens all the darts of " ill-fortune, and embitters every woe."

Here he ſtopped, and I was obliged to leave him, after having given him an invitation to my houſe, where I hope to be able to alleviate his misfortunes, without hurting his ſenſibility. But I cannot help expreſſing my wiſh, that all who, deluded by a heated imagination,

imagination, feel themſelves inclined to quit the comforts of a parent and a home, in purſuit of a profeſſion which is prohibited by law, and which conſtantly entails on its followers miſery and diſgrace, may avoid his wretchedneſs, by avoiding his conduct.

No. CXI. ON THE PLEASURES OF REFLECTION.

THAT the enjoyments of the underſtanding exceed the pleaſures of ſenſe, is a truth, confeſſed by all who are capable of exerting the faculties of thinking in their full vigour. But by theſe pleaſures are generally underſtood ſublime contemplations on ſubjects of ſcience and abſtruſe diſquiſition; contemplations which can only be the reſult of uncommon powers, and extraordinary efforts.

But there are intellectual pleaſures of another kind; to the enjoyment of which, neither great abilities nor learning are required. Theſe are no other than the pleaſures of reflection, which are open to the illiterate mechanic, as well as to the ſage philoſopher, and conſtitute ſome of the ſweeteſt ſatisfactions of human life.

There are few who have not felt pleaſing ſenſations ariſing from a retroſpective view of the firſt period of their lives. To recollect the puerile amuſements, the petty anxieties, and the eager purſuits of childhood, is a taſk in which all delight. It is common to obſerve, that on no ſubject do men dwell with ſuch pleaſure, as the boyiſh tricks and wanton pranks which they practiſed at ſchool. The hoary head looks back with a ſmile of complacency, mixed with regret, on the ſeaſon when health glowed on the cheek, when lively ſpirits warmed the heart, and when toil ſtrung the nerves with vigour.

Cicero has remarked, that events the moſt diſagreeable, during their immediate influence, give an exquiſite ſatisfaction when their conſequences have ceaſed; and Æneas ſolaces his companions, under the hardſhips they

they endured, with the conſideration, that the remembrance of their ſufferings would, one day, give them ſatisfaction. That theſe ſentiments are juſt, is well known to thoſe who have enjoyed the converſation of the ſoldier. Battles, ſkirmiſhes, and ſieges, at which, perhaps, he trembled during the action, furniſh him with topics of converſation, and ſources of pleaſure, for the remainder of his life.

Reflection is the propereſt employment, and the ſweeteſt ſatisfaction, in a rational old age. Deſtitute of ſtrength and vigour, neceſſary for bodily exertions, and furniſhed with obſervations by experience, the old man finds his greateſt pleaſure to conſiſt in wandering in imagination over paſt ſcenes of delight, in recounting the adventures of his youth, the viciſſitudes of human life, and the public events to which he is proud of having been an eye-witneſs. Of ſo exalted a nature are theſe enjoyments, that theologiſts have not heſitated to aſſert, that to recollect a well-ſpent life, is to anticipate the bliſs of a future exiſtence.

The profeſſors of philoſophy, who will be acknowledged to have underſtood the nature of true and ſubſtantial pleaſure better than the buſy, the gay, and the diſſipated, have ever ſhewn a predilection for privacy and ſolitude. No other cauſe have they aſſigned for their conduct in forſaking ſociety, than that the noiſe and hurry of the world is incompatible with the exertion of calm reaſon, and diſpaſſionate reflection. The apophthegm of that antient, who ſaid, "he was never "leſs alone than when by himſelf," is not to be conſidered merely as an epigrammatic turn. In vain was it to purſue philoſophy in the Suburra; ſhe was only to be courted, with ſucceſs, in the ſequeſtered ſhade of rural retirement.

Were the powers of reflection cultivated by habit, mankind would at all times be able to derive a pleaſure from their own breaſts, as rational as it is exalted. To the attainment of this happineſs, a ſtrict adherence to the rules of virtue is neceſſary; for let it be remembered, that none can feel the pleaſures of reflection, who do not enjoy the peace of innocence.

No.

No. CXII. HINTS TO THOSE WHO ARE DESIGNED FOR THE PROFESSION OF THE LAW.

THERE is no order in the community more contemptible than that of those practitioners in the law, who, without one liberal principle of justice or equity, possess a skill in little else but quibbles, and in those points by which villainy is taught to proceed with impunity, cunning enabled to elude the spirit by misrepresenting the letter, and truth perplexed, obscured, and lost, in the mazes of chicanery. It is indeed surprising, that many, who call themselves men of honour, and who profess to have had a liberal education, should allow themselves, in the practice of their profession, to assert palpable falsehood to confound the clearest evidence; and defend, with all the appearance of sincere conviction, what they know to be indefensible. It is not an admissible apology to assert, that their profession requires such an abasement; for a similar justification might be offered by the sharper or the highwayman. There are, undoubtedly, certain laws of honour and truth established in the heart of every honest man, of which no regard for lucre, and no jesuitical pretence of professional necessity can justify the infringement.

There seems, indeed, to be a very unfortunate error in many among the students of the law, who value abilities and technical knowledge at a high rate, but entertain no great esteem for goodness of heart, and integrity of conduct. While the world allows them abilities and knowledge, they depend with security on success, though they should be notoriously mercenary in public, and debauched in private life. Indeed, they have had living examples to prove, that however bad the morals of the man, if the impudence and eloquence of the lawyer are approved, he may have what briefs he pleases, and even be advanced to the dignity of a

Lord Chancellor. An infamous character, blafted with imputations of the moft atrocious kind in the walks of private and domeftic life, may be introduced, by his known effrontery, and his fuppofed abilities, to that dignified feat, where law is to be corrected by equity, and where the confcience of the judge is the chief controul.

Whatever be the abilities of a man, yet if he be notoriouſly irregular and intemperate in the violation of thoſe laws which are prior to all human laws, he ought not to be promoted to any office of truft and honour, particularly in the law. If the governing part of a nation were fincere in its profeſſion of a belief in the national religion, men who are remarkable for breaking the laws of that religion, would be at leaft neglected, if not diſgraced. The advancement of bad men to the higheſt offices in the law, is a diſgrace to the government, and an injury to the people, whom it greatly corrupts; not only by the example, but by leading them to ſuppoſe, that the governors of the nation, whom they naturally ſuppoſe wiſer than themſelves, conſider religion and morality merely as engines of ſtate.

Though, therefore, the ſtudent may ſee men of infamous characters advanced and encouraged, let him not be deluded. If he is wiſe, he will ſtill pay his greateſt attention to the cultivation of a pure and honeſt heart; this will furniſh him with more ſatisfaction than was ever derived to a bad man from the inſignia and emoluments of office, and the fees beſtowed by popular favour. Whatever practice or preferment can be acquired conſiſtently with this, accept with gratitude. But if the public, or the rulers of the nation, ſtill prefer the bold pretender, whoſe appearance and abilities ariſe from that audacity which accompanies a bad and an unfeeling heart, deſpiſe all that they can beſtow, and remember that this life is ſhort, and that there is another; that this world is the place of probation, and the next of reward. Remember that a pure heart, a clear conſcience, an independent ſpirit, and a ſoul that ſpurns the lucre which is to be gained by unmanly ſervility, are infinitely ſuperior (conſidered only as they tend to promote happineſs) to the poſſeſſion of the

ſeals,

ſeals, with their uſual appendages, a peerage and a penſion.

With reſpect to the modes of preparation for this profeſſion, I ſee, with regret, that an illiberal method prevails, which conſiſts in confining the future advocate, like a clerk in a merchant's counting-houſe, to the deſk of ſome practiſing lawyer, and teaching him the ordinary buſineſs almoſt mechanically. There he ſits, and copies a great number of dry formalities, ſuch as, if he attended to them, could not enlarge his mind; ſuch, indeed, as, without a remarkable dulneſs of diſpoſition, he cannot attend to. After labouring for ſeveral years in a manual employment, as ſedentary, and ſcarcely more liberal than that of the weaver or the watchmaker, he comes forth a formidable barriſter; formidable, indeed, in ſome reſpects, as he has probably acquired a good deal of that low and dirty practice, and that narrow and confined mode of thinking, which a liberal mind would deſpiſe too much to be able to acquire. He is, as it were, a ſpider, and can ſpin cobwebs in the dark and foul receſſes of the heart, to catch thoſe diminutive objects, which a more generous animal would not deign to enſnare.

The true method of arriving at an eligible ſpecies of eminence in the ſtudy of the law is, to enlarge the capacity of the mind by a moſt comprehenſive and claſſical education; and then to furniſh it with ſome portion of every ſpecies of human knowledge. A general and enlarged philoſophy, moral, natural, and theological, ought to form the firm baſis of the future ſuperſtructure. On this ſhould be added hiſtory, antient and modern; general juriſprudence, and a particular acquaintance with the ſpirit of laws in all the civilized nations of antiquity. Long and accurate obſervation of men and manners ought to be added; and the virtues of exemplary benevolence and humanity ſhould complete the fabric. Such ſhould be the preparation;—what it is, we have already ſeen. But ſometimes even the toil of the writing-deſk, as well as every other ſerious preparation, is omitted, and the ſtudent called to the bar, puts a large wig over his powdered hair and pig-tail, and

ſtarts up a pleader; ready to undertake any cauſe either of property, or of life.

Whoever has read the works of Cicero, will remember how great a ſhare of learning he requires in his orator, who was, indeed, a pleader, or advocate; but not ſuch a pleader, or ſuch an advocate, as many of thoſe who have diſgraced the modern courts of judicature. The great ſtateſmen of Rome ſupported the character of lawyers with a peculiar dignity, unknown to modern inſtitutions. Adorned with philoſophy, as well as law, they deſcended to the courts to defend their clients; not with the hope of a paltry fee, but induced by the pure motives of friendſhip and humanity; by a deſire of doing good, and a regard for juſtice. Men, it is true, muſt live by their profeſſions; and, therefore, the diſintereſtedneſs of the antients, who had other reſources, cannot be univerſally imitated. But, ſurely, in an age that pretends to peculiar illumination and philanthropy, and in a people who have long profeſſed a moſt humane religion, it is wonderful to find men, who aſſume ſo important a profeſſion, ready to defend any ſide for pay; and debaſing their characters by an affectation of extreme libertiniſm, of infidelity, and of every kind of profligacy, which tends to harden the heart, and to deaden the feelings of humanity, no leſs than to ſtifle the ſentiments of true honour.

No. CXIII. ON SOME INCONVENIENCES WHICH UNAVOIDABLY ATTEND LIVING WRITERS.

THE compoſition of a book has often been compared to the furniſhing of a feaſt; in which, whatever art may have been exerted, and variety produced, it ſeldom happens that every palate is equally pleaſed. Sometimes the diſhes are not dreſſed and ſeaſoned as they ought to be; and ſometimes the organs of ſenſation in the gueſts are languid and indiſpoſed.

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No work, however excellent, ever yet appeared, which was not blamed, as well as praiſed, by many; but we heſitate not to pronounce that good, which retains, during a conſiderable time, a majority of ſuffrages in its favour. Longinus, very reaſonably, makes the favourable opinion of various nations, for many ages, an infallible criterion of an author's ſingular excellence. And it is certain, that to call in queſtion the merits of thoſe books which have long ſurvived their authors, contributes more to diſgrace the critic, than to diminiſh the author's reputation.

But it is not ſo with living writers. They labour under peculiar diſadvantages; not only from the difficulty of arriving at diſtinction after ſo many illuſtrious predeceſſors, but from the prejudices and the envy of their equals and contemporaries. Men have always felt an inclination to exalt departed genius, not only from a ſincere admiration of it, but alſo with a ſecret deſire to degrade living merit, by introducing an invidious compariſon. No one aſpires at the diſtinctions of fortune, or civil honours, without exciting jealouſy and envy. It would be therefore unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, that literary ambition ſhould be exempted from the attendants of all ambition. It aims at peculiar diſtinction, and muſt therefore excite peculiar oppoſition.

There never yet was a moral writer, however ſincere, whoſe life and external manners correſponded, in every reſpect, with the dignity of his writings; and who did not, in ſome degree, diſappoint thoſe who were led, by the admiration of his works, to approach his perſon, and to ſeek his company and converſation in the ſcenes of familiar life. Too high an expectation is uſually formed of him; and we do not conſider, that in his book we ſurvey only the picture of his mind; a picture, which is uſually ſullied and deformed by the crazy covering in which it is involved. When he ſat down to write, his ſoul was probably in its proper ſtate; all ſpiritual, and all contemplative. No ſooner has he laid aſide his pen, and departed from his library, than he is neceſſarily engaged in the common purſuits of mankind; and diſplays, like them, many frailties, and many of thoſe faults which he has very ſincerely condemned

demned in his moral diſſertations. But when a ſpectator, unacquainted with life, manners, and the inconſtancy of the human heart, beholds this difference between the writer's book and his behaviour, he, too precipitately and ſeverely, indulges his cenſure, and learns to deſpiſe him whom, at a diſtance, he admired. Thus are enemies and calumniators multiplied, without any other failings on the part of the injured perſon, than the common imbecilities attendant on the moſt improved ſtate of human nature. Foibles and errors, which would ſcarcely be noticed in others, are not only remarked in him, but remembered and related in company as matter of entertainment. Even his ſincerity is doubted, and the writer is lowered by the imperfections of the man; though the imperfections are only the characteriſtics of humanity. If he has written againſt avarice or ambition, and happens, by honeſt induſtry or good fortune, to gain money or promotion, he is immediately repreſented as a hypocrite; notwithſtanding he may have a family dependant upon him for ſupport, or may have worn himſelf out in the ſervice of the public, without ſeeking or gaining any other emolument than what may afford him an humble and quiet retreat in his old age.

It is not eaſy to write, without ſometimes appearing to aſſume an air of ſuperiority. Moral precepts would often be ineffectual, if they were not enforced in a ſtyle, which, though by no means dogmatical, is yet, in a due degree, authoritative. The neighbours, and the familiar acquaintance of the moraliſt, who are accuſtomed to eſtimate importance by property, and to judge of the weight of a man's opinions by the weight of his purſe, are offended to find him, who has not a vote in a county meeting, nor an acre of arable or paſture on the face of the earth, daring to expreſs himſelf with as much freedom, as if he were animated with the conſciouſneſs of keeping a pack of fox hounds, or had conſiderable influence at the election of a knight of the ſhire. Nevertheleſs, if what he writes be true, truth being great, he who is armed with it will certainly prevail. Reſiſtance or contradiction will be ineffectual. Nothing, therefore, remains but ridicule and detraction

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to ſap the fortreſs, which is proof againſt aſſault. The writer, therefore, is repreſented by the neighbouring gentlemen as an oddity, a melancholy recluſe, and, perhaps, a little cracked; both he and his family are pitied by the humane ladies, for being perpetually confined to muſty books, and total ſtrangers to all true pleaſure. Between the ſippings of the tea, and the dealing of the cards, much criticiſm is diſplayed, in which, it is not eaſy to determine which is the more conſpicuous, ignorance or ill-nature. It is not uncommon for ladies, who can hardly write their names, or indite a love-letter, without Entick's ſpelling dictionary, to decide on the merit of a celebrated poem, or any other new publication, with all the authority of an Ariſtotle, or the fooliſh virulence of a Zoilus. And who, indeed, can controvert a remark, however injudicious or malignant, when it proceeds from lips which add a grace and ſweetneſs to all they utter? A veteran virgin may ſurely be allowed to conſole herſelf, in the intervals of ſcandal, with the ſeverity of literary criticiſm. It muſt indeed be owned, that many lies and falſe cenſures on characters, are publiſhed to the world at the tea and the card-table; but there is this comfort, that whenever it is known whence they originate, they are ſuffered, by all candid and ſenſible perſons, to drop, ſtill-born, from their prolific parents. Yet, ſometimes, they ſtruggle into life, and are able to murder many a reputation before their own final extinction.

Every thing excellent is to be paid for at a certain price of inconvenience or difficulty. The calumnies of envy, ignorance, and impertinence, muſt be ſuſtained by him who endeavours, by worthy means, to procure the eſteem of the worthy. He muſt weigh the praiſes againſt the cenſures, and enjoy the predominant applauſe, while he neglects the ſevere remarks of impertinence or ill-temper, as trifles lighter than the air. No truth has been more repeatedly uttered, than that nothing in this ſublunary ſtate is, in every reſpect, what we wiſh it. We muſt then learn to ſubmit to neceſſity, and turn our attention from our evils, to our advantages. After all our complaints, Providence is uſually found kind and impartial; and, if we poſſeſs but humility

humility and patience, we ſhall diſcover, under our moſt diſagreeable ſituation, ſome copious ſource of placid enjoyment. The ill uſage of the world will recoil from the heart, which is ſhielded with faith and innocence, as the billows are reverberated from the rock.

Whatever difficulties or injuries a writer may ſuſtain, he may conſole himſelf, if he has always taken the part of truth and virtue, that he has employed the talents which God gave him, at leaſt in an inoffenſive and rational manner; and that it is probable, that many, in the great maſs of mankind, may poſſeſs a kindred ſpirit, and at ſome favourable moment may receive pleaſure and advantage from his lucubrations, even when he is united with the duſt from which he was taken, and become equally inſenſible to cenſure or applauſe.

No. CXIV. ON THE OBLIGATIONS WHICH LEARNING OWES TO THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

MANY among thoſe who have made the greateſt pretenſions to learning, have profeſſed themſelves enemies to Revelation. It is not, indeed, difficult to account for their rejection of a religion which is all humility, and by no means calculated to pleaſe ſuch as conſider the applauſe of men as the moſt valuable object, and who pride themſelves on the infallibility of their own intellects. To the bold, the conceited, and the half-learned pretender to philoſophy, who is weak enough to think his reaſon commenſurate to every object which falls under its notice, that ſyſtem, which requires the exerciſe of faith more than of reaſon, appears, as the ſcriptures themſelves obſerve, fooliſhneſs. Pride, and a very ſilly kind of pride, ſuch, indeed, as ariſes from narrow views of things, and an ignorance of human nature, is the foundation of infidelity.

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It is, however, no leſs ungrateful, than fooliſh and wicked, in the ſons of learning, to devote their abilities to the extermination of the national religion. For it is really true, that all the antient learning which now remains, was preſerved by ſome peculiar circumſtances attending the propagation of Chriſtianity; and, I believe, it will be thought very probable, that if the antient languages, and the books written in them, had been entirely loſt, the civilized nations of Europe would have ſtill continued in a ſtate of darkneſs and barbariſm. Real ſuperſtition would then, indeed, have reigned triumphant; and the philoſopher, as he calls himſelf, who is now writing down Chriſtianity, would have been trembling at witches and goblins, ſpells and enchantments. He makes uſe of that very light, which has directed his ſteps in the paths of learning, to diſcover the moſt probable means of extinguiſhing the ſource of all illumination.

I was led into this train of reflections by the peruſal of a charge of a late very learned archdeacon of London, in which he evinces, that our Saviour ſpoke moſt truly in more ſenſes than one, when he ſaid of himſelf, "I "AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD."

When any ſpecies of literary induſtry is conſidered as a duty founded on religion, care will be taken to preſerve thoſe parts of literature, which, from the indolence and infirmity of the human mind, might have been loſt amidſt revolutions, perſecutions, diſtreſs, and the fury of conqueſt. In every difficulty, the Chriſtians fled for comfort to their ſcriptures, and watched over them with peculiar vigilance. The Septuagint preſerved, in the worſt times, a knowledge of Greek; and the Latin tranſlations, which were multiplied with avidity, reſcued the Latin language from a total oblivion. Joſephus was ſtudied, and therefore preſerved by the Chriſtians more carefully than by the Jews; and the neceſſity of Greek for the underſtanding of the New Teſtament, cauſed that language not only to be ſaved from the ravages of time, but alſo to be ſtudied with devout attention.

The Fathers of the church wrote in Greek during three centuries; and at a time when the Latin language

was gradually decaying, the Latin fathers contributed ſomething to its reſtoration; and wrote, as well as their coeval writers among the Pagans, not indeed with Auguſtan excellence, but ſtill well enough to preſerve a ſkill in the conſtruction and vocabulary of the language.

A conſiderable knowledge of hiſtory, and ſomething of chronology and philoſophy, was neceſſary in ſtudying and defending the ſcriptures, even in the earlieſt ages; and many Chriſtians appeared well ſkilled in theſe parts of learning, at a time when they were generally neglected. Religion and conſcience operated as a ſtimulus, when all other motives were inſufficient to retard the mind in its ſwift progreſs down the declivity.

With a view, and ſolely with a view, to enable eccleſiaſtics to read and underſtand the ſcriptures, even in the moſt diſmal night of ignorance, there were ſome places of inſtruction in cathedrals and monaſteries, in which the embers of literature, if we may venture to uſe that expreſſion, were preſerved from total extinction; in which a ſpark lay latent, which was one day to relume a light to lighten the univerſe.

The little learning of thoſe unfortunate ages, though it did not enable the perſons who poſſeſſed it to taſte and underſtand the beauties of the antient poets and philoſophers, yet gave them ſome idea of the value of books in general, and enabled them to tranſcribe with tolerable accuracy, even what they did not accurately underſtand. Thus were thoſe ineſtimable treaſures of all elegance and pleaſing knowledge, the old Greek and Latin authors handed down to ages more bleſſed; to thoſe who were able to unlock them, and pour out their riches for the general utility. Nor are we indebted to Chriſtians for the claſſics only; but alſo for the Roman law, and the codes of Juſtinian and Theodoſius. Books, which were deſtroyed by ignorant and angry kings and conquerors, found a ſafe aſylum in religious houſes; and even Monkery, which has been juſtly reprobated as one of the follies of human nature, became, under the direction of Providence, the inſtrument of many of thoſe bleſſings which now contribute greatly to the happineſs and dignity of an enlightened empire.

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The revival of learning, as it is termed, or its emancipation from churches and monasteries, and general diffusion over the world, is greatly owing to the efforts of ecclesiastics. There arose, in that auspicious morning, a constellation of polite and profound Christian scholars, whose effulgence has scarcely been outshone by any succeeding luminaries in the literary horizon.

The best scholars of modern times, not only in theology, but in every part of human learning, have been Christian divines. They were led by their pursuit of religious knowledge, into the collateral paths of philosophy, philology, and all elegant and useful literature.

It is to the piety of Christians that we owe the venerable foundations of schools and colleges; those institutions, which, though they have often been perverted, have still kept the light burning like the vestal fire, and handed the torch from one generation to another like the runners in the torch-race. It was the love of Christ which taught those towers to rise on the banks of the Cam and the Isis, and planted seminaries of learning in every considerable town throughout the kingdom.

"To the gospel then," says the learned divine who suggested this subject, "and to those who embraced "it, are due our grateful acknowledgments for the "learning that is at present in the world. The infi- "dels, educated in Christian countries, owe what learn- "ing they have to Christianity, and act the part of those "brutes, which, when they have sucked the dam, turn "about and strike her."

No. CXV. CURSORY REMARKS ON THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF DR. JORTIN.

THE mind feels a secret complacency in contemplating characters eminent for virtue, learning, and religion; and there are few who are not delighted,

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as well as inſtructed, by the praiſes beſtowed on departed merit. Notwithſtanding the depravity of human nature, virtue ſtill appears amiable to the vicious, and knowledge to the ignorant. Experience, indeed, ſeems to confirm the opinion of Plato, that goodneſs, excluſive of its collateral advantages, is poſſeſſed of charms irreſiſtibly captivating.

A review of the life of the late Dr. Jortin cannot but ſuggeſt the moſt pleaſing reflections. As a poet, a divine, a philoſopher, and a man, he ſerved the cauſe of religion, learning, and morality. There are, indeed, many writers whoſe reputation is more diffuſed among the vulgar and illiterate, but few will be found whoſe names ſtand higher than Dr. Jortin's in the eſteem of the judicious. His Latin poetry is claſſically elegant. His diſcourſes and diſſertations ſenſible, ingenious, and argumentative. His remarks on eccleſiaſtical hiſtory intereſting and impartial. His ſermons replete with ſound ſenſe and rational morality, expreſſed in a ſtyle ſimple, pure, and perſpicuous.

Simplicity of ſtyle is a grace, which, though it may not captivate at firſt ſight, is ſure in the end to give permanent ſatisfaction. It does not excite admiration, but it raiſes eſteem. It does not warm to rapture, but it ſoothes to complacency. Unſkilful writers ſeldom aim at this excellence. They imagine, that what is natural and common cannot be beautiful. Every thing in their compoſitions muſt be ſtrained, every thing affected: but Dr. Jortin had ſtudied the antients, and perhaps formed himſelf on the model of Xenophon. He wrote on ſubjects of morality, and morality is founded on reaſon, and reaſon is always cool and diſpaſſionate. A florid declamation, embelliſhed with rhetorical figures, and animated with pathetic deſcription, may indeed amuſe the fancy, and raiſe a tranſient emotion in the heart; but rational diſcourſe alone can convince the underſtanding, and reform the conduct.

The firſt efforts of genius have commonly been in poetry. Unreſtrained by the frigidity of argument, and the confinement of rules, the young mind gladly indulges the flights of imagination. Cicero, as well as many other antient philoſophers, orators, and hiſtorians,

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is known to have ſacrificed to the Muſes in his earlier productions. Dr. Jortin adds to the number of thoſe who confirm the obſervation. In his *Luſus Poetici*, one of the firſt of his works, are united claſſical language, tender ſentiment, and harmonious verſe. Among the modern Latin poets, there are few who do not yield to Dr. Jortin. His ſapphics, on the ſtory of Bacchus and Ariadne, are eaſy, elegant, and poetical. The little ode, in which the calm life of the philoſopher is compared to the gentle ſtream gliding through a ſilent grove, is highly pleaſing to the mind, and is perfectly elegant in the compoſition. The Lyrics are indeed all excellent. The poem on the Immortality of the Soul is ingenious, poetical, and an exact imitation of the ſtyle of Lucretius. In ſhort, the whole collection is ſuch as would ſcarcely have diſgraced a Roman in the age of an Auguſtus.

Time, if it does not cool the fire of imagination, certainly ſtrengthens the powers of the judgment. As our author advanced in life, he cultivated his reaſon rather than his fancy, and deſiſted from his efforts in poetry, to exert his abilities in the diſquiſitions of criticiſm. His obſervations on one of the fathers of Engliſh poetry, need but to be more generally known, in order to be more generally approved.

Claſſical productions are rather amuſing than inſtructive. His works of this kind are all juvenile, and naturally flowed from a claſſical education. Theſe, however, were but preparatory to his higher deſigns, and ſoon gave way to the more important enquiries which were peculiar to his profeſſion. His diſcourſes on the Chriſtian Religion, one of the firſt fruits of his theological purſuits, abound with that ſound ſenſe and ſolid argument, which entitle their author to a rank very near the celebrated Grotius.

His diſſertations are equally remarkable for taſte, learning, originality, and ingenuity.

His remarks on Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory are full of manly ſenſe, ingenious ſtrictures, and profound erudition. The work is highly beneficial to mankind, as it repreſents that ſuperſtition which diſgraced human nature, in its proper light, and gives a right ſenſe of the advantages derived from

from religious reformation. He every where expreſſes himſelf with peculiar vehemence againſt the infatuation of bigotry and fanaticiſm. Convinced that true happineſs is founded on a right uſe of the reaſoning powers, he makes it the ſcope of all his religious works, to lead mankind from the errors of imagination, to embrace the dictates of diſpaſſionate reaſon.

Poſthumous publications, it has been remarked, are uſually inferior in merit to thoſe which are publiſhed in an author's life-time. And, indeed, the opinion ſeems plauſible; as it may be preſumed, that an author's reaſon for not publiſhing his works, is a conſciouſneſs of their inferiority. The Sermons of Dr. Jortin are, however, an exception. Good ſenſe and ſound morality appear in them, not, indeed, dreſſed out in the meretricious ornaments of a florid ſtyle, but in all the manly force, and ſimple graces, of natural eloquence. The ſame caprice, which raiſes to reputation thoſe trifling diſcourſes which have nothing to recommend them but a prettineſs of fancy, and a flowery language, will again conſign them to obliviion: but the ſermons of Dr. Jortin will always be read with pleaſure and edification.

The tranſition from an author's writings to his life, is frequently diſadvantageous to his character. Dr. Jortin, however, when no longer conſidered as an author, but as a man, is ſo far from being leſſened in our opinion, that he excites ſtill greater eſteem and applauſe. A ſimplicity of manners, an inoffenſive behaviour, an univerſal benevolence, candour, modeſty, and good ſenſe, were his characteriſtics. Though his genius, and love of letters, led him to chooſe the ſtill vale of ſequeſtered life, yet was his merit conſpicuous enough to attract the notice of a certain primate who did honour to epiſcopacy. Unknown by perſonal acquaintance, and unrecommended by the ſolicitation of friends, or the interpoſition of power, he was preſented, by Archbiſhop Herring, to a valuable benefice in London, as a reward for his exertions as a ſcholar and a divine. Some time after he became chaplain to a late biſhop of London, who gave him the vicarage of Kenſington, and appointed him archdeacon of his

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diocese. This was all the preferment he had, nor had he this till he was advanced in life. He did not, however, repine. Thus he speaks of himself. "Not "to his erudition—but to his constant love and pursuit "of it—he owes a situation and a station better than "he expected, and as good as he ought to desire."

No. CXVI. ON THE UNION OF EXTRAVAGANCE IN TRIFLES AND VICE, WITH PARSIMONY IN ALL THE TRULY HONOURABLE, USEFUL, AND NECESSARY EXPENCES.

NO appearance in the moral world is more remarkable, than that combination which is often observed in the same character, of avarice with profusion, of meanness with liberality. Vanity, selfishness, and a want of serious principles, are striking circumstances in the manners of the present age; and as vanity leads to expensive ostentation, so selfishness, and want of principle, have a natural tendency to produce covetousness and rapacity. Very few restraints are allowed to operate on the modes of acquiring or of saving money, except the fear of detection. There is scarcely any meanness or baseness to which many persons, who make the greatest shew in dress, furniture, and equipage, are not ready to submit under the certainty of concealment.

The time has been, when a great family, residing in a great house of a village, was considered as a blessing to all the neighbouring country. The poor were employed in adorning and improving the grounds all about it. The table in the parlour was always open for the reception of the gentlemen who resided within ten miles of the house; and the kitchen afforded warmth and plenty to the poor and industrious tenant or labourer. The rich man resided in the house of his fathers, and spent his money among those who earned it for

for him by the ſweat of their brows. But, according to the modern ſyſtem of faſhionable manners, ſuch a kind of life would be deemed intolerably dull, as well as antiquated and vulgar. The family, therefore, ſpend as little time as poſſible at the noble ſeat of their anceſtors, but haſten to the ſea-ſide or the watering-places, where they hire a little hut, or cabin, and laviſh their money on ſtrangers, without any returns of gratitude, or of rational ſatisfaction. The farmer, who lives in their native village, returning weary from his plough, ſhakes his head as he paſſes the cold kitchen, and turns with pity and contempt from the ſmokeleſs roof. The ſervants are pinched, and even envy the comparative plenty and independence of the next cottagers. The whole country rings with reports of the meanneſs and poor living at the great houſe. In the mean time, the lord and lady, the baronet or eſquire, with their reſpective families, are figuring, as it is called, in all the profuſion of emulous extravagance, at Bath, or Brighthelmſtone. While they grudge the bread and cheeſe which are conſumed in their own houſe, or refuſe to contribute to a brief, or any charitable inſtitution among their poor neighbours at home, they ſubſcribe moſt liberally, to an infamous maſter of the ceremonies, and to every faſhionable amuſement; they give feaſts to ſtrangers whom they ſhall never ſee any more, and whoſe principal recommendation is, that they appear, from their external ſplendor, not to want any aſſiſtance. Their vanity is gratified in ſeeing the great and the rich at their table; and what ſignifies it, they think, if the wretches at home, whom nobody knows, ſtarve and rot on the dunghills whence they originated. They grudge the poor even ſmall beer in their own houſes; but drench every rich gueſt who viſits them at their lodgings with champagne and burgundy. How ſhall we account for ſuch inconſiſtency, but by ſuppoſing that theſe perſonages poſſeſs large eſtates and little ſouls, immenſe vanity and diminutive underſtandings; and that the badneſs is only exceeded by the meanneſs of their hearts?

It is eaſy to obſerve perſons of this deſcription, who will not heſitate to expend many hundreds in dreſs alone,

alone, but who, when a book is praiſed in their preſence, will ſpare no trouble in finding ſomebody of whom they may borrow it, alleging, in excuſe, that books are ſo dear, it is impoſſible to buy every thing that comes out. The price of the book ſhall be three ſhillings, and it ſhall contain amuſement for three weeks, and yet they will not buy it becauſe it would be extravagant; though they will not ſcruple to expend three guineas, any night in the week, for three hours paſtime in a party at the public places of diverſion. The milliners, the hair-dreſſers, the perfumers bills, ſhall amount to many hundreds a year; but five pounds expended at the bookſeller's would be downright prodigality. Guineas flow, without reſtraint, in ſubſcriptions to balls, concerts, aſſemblies; to dancing-maſters, muſic-maſters, and to players: but when the pariſh lecturer's book is brought, or the Marine Society, or the Magdalen, or the Infirmary, or the contribution for the Releaſe of Priſoners for ſmall Debts, or the ſufferers in Barbadoes, or the priſoners of war, are recommended as fit objects to receive their ſuperfluities, they immediately look grave, complain their taxes riſe, and rents fall; and aſſert, with an unfeeling heart, that theſe are not times to admit of any expences which are not abſolutely neceſſary.

The education of their children ought certainly to conſtitute one of the firſt cares of the rich; and no reaſonable expence ſhould be withheld in the accompliſhment of it. But there are few great families, in which this is not one of the ſmalleſt articles of annual expenditure. From the butler and lady's maid, from the gentleman and footman, down even to the groom and the ſcullion, the wages are, probably, one, two, three, or four-ſcore pounds a year, with board and perquiſites, according to the dignity of the reſpectable perſonages; but if the ſuperintendant of education is allowed only the wages of the body-coachman, though he is obliged to feed and lodge young maſter, and furniſh him with many neceſſaries as well as learning, he is reckoned a fortunate man, and is doubly happy, if his bill is not canvaſſed and curtailed. I know a family, in which the butler annually receives juſt four times the ſum which many

many perſons of fortune pay, at ſchools of repute, for the board and education of the heir apparent.

Indeed, in all neceſſary and laudable expences, a degree of frugality is diſplayed which approaches to extreme meanneſs and parſimony. The poor tradeſmen who ſupply the ordinary articles of domeſtic conſumption, are not only denied their price, but, after every abatement, are obliged to wait an unreaſonable time for their money. So far from poſſeſſing an inclination to be generous, it grieves ſuch perſons to be juſt. But though they who furniſh commodities, without which life cannot be ſupported, are ill-uſed and defrauded, whoever can ſupply any circumſtances of dreſs, equipage, luxury, by which ſelfiſhneſs and vanity may be gratified, are profuſely and immediately rewarded. Men of letters, or ingenuity in the profeſſions, are kept at a diſtance; but the door is always open to players, and to ſignors and ſignioras. Chaplains and tutors are out of faſhion; but their place is abundantly ſupplied by fiddlers, pipers, caperers, and ſcaramouches. A dancing or muſic-maſter, who can enable the young ladies to diſplay a fine finger or a fine foot, is immediately conſidered as the beſt friend of the family, made a companion, invited to the table, paid extravagantly, and complimented with thanks and preſents; neither is it wonderful, if the young ladies fall in love with theſe fine gentlemen, and marry them; ſince they appear, both in their own and their parents eyes, to poſſeſs the ſummit of all human excellence. As to the perſon who may be employed to form their minds, he is uſually engaged from the recommendation of cheapneſs, and is, for the moſt part, made an object of ridicule, becauſe he has not the air of Noverre and Gallini.

A fortune, conſidered in its true light, is a ſacred truſt, and intended to promote, not only the happineſs of its poſſeſſor, but of all with whom he is connected, and who deſerve his beneficence. The time has been, when the poor were thought to have a claim upon that ſuperfluity, which is now laviſhed on the mean miniſters to luxury, vice, and vain oſtentation. We read in the tablets in our churches, and in the records of all charitable foundations, that people of the higheſt faſhion were

were of opinion to be good was eſſential to the character of true gentility. But now, if we were to aſk the repreſentative of a rich family, where he had beſtowed the ſuperfluities of the laſt year, he might anſwer, that he had depoſited ſome ſhare of it in the pocket of an Italian, who had the extraordinary merit of being able to ſtand longer on one leg than the reſt of the two-legged and unfeathered race. He might anſwer, that he had loſt it at the gaming table; ſpent it in the tavern and brothel; ſported it away at Newmarket; laviſhed it on dogs, horſes, jockies; and left the poor and the deſerving to the care of Providence.

That Providence, whoſe bleſſings he abuſes and perverts, ſeldom fails to puniſh his ingratitude. For as all his external circumſtances have more in them of ſhew than of ſolidity, ſo alſo have all his boaſted enjoyments, and all that happineſs, which he thinks to derive from riches, independently of their proper application.

No. CXVII. ON A TASTE FOR THE CULTIVATION OF FLOWERS, AND OF BEAUTIFUL SHRUBS AND TREES.

BEAUTY of every kind is formed to captivate, and there is this peculiar advantage in contemplating the beauties of vegetable nature, that we may permit our hearts to be enſnared by them, without apprehenſion of a dangerous or a diſhonourable ſervitude. A taſte for the beauties of vegetation is the mark of a pure and innocent mind, and, at the ſame time, one of the beſt preſervatives of purity and innocence. It diverts the attention from the turbulent ſcenes of folly, and ſuperinduces a placid tranquillity, highly favourable to the gentler virtues, and to the permanency of our moſt refined enjoyments.

I have often been ſurpriſed to find thoſe, who poſſeſſed a very acute ſuſceptibility of artificial or literary grace, and were powerfully affected by the beauties of a poem, a piece of ſculpture, or a painting, not at all more

more ſenſible of the charms of a tree, or a flowret, than a common and inelegant ſpectator. They have dwelt with rapture on a fine deſcription of the Vale of Tempe, they have entered into all the delight which a Shakeſpeare or a Milton meant to communicate in their enchanting pictures of flowery and ſylvan ſcenes, and yet can walk through a wood, or tread on a bank of violets and primroſes, without appearing to be affected with any peculiar pleaſure. This is certainly the effect of a ſuperficial judgment; for there is no truth of which philoſophers have been longer convinced, than that the realities of nature infinitely exceed the moſt perfect productions of imitating art.

The beauty of colour, though juſtly eſteemed ſubordinate to that of ſhape, is yet found to delight the eye more immediately, and more univerſally. When colour and ſhape are united in perfection, he who can view them with inſenſibility, muſt reſign all pretenſions to delicacy of perception. Such an union has been uſually effected by nature in the formation of a flower.

There is ſcarcely a ſingle object in all the vegetable world, in which ſo many agreeable qualities are combined, as in the queen of flowers, the roſe. Nature certainly meant to regale the ſenſes of her favourite with an object, which preſents to him at once freſhneſs, fragrancy, colour, and ſhape. The very ſoul ſeems to be refreſhed on the bare recollection of the pleaſure which the ſenſes receive in contemplating, in a fine vernal morning, the charms of the pink, the violet, the honey-ſuckle, the hyacinth, the narciſſus, the jonquil, the rocket, the tulip, and a thouſand others, in every variety of figure, ſcent, and hue; for nature is no leſs remarkable for the accuracy and beauty of her works, than for variety and profuſion. Defects are always diſcovered in the works of art when they are examined with a microſcope; but a cloſe examination of a leaf of a flower, is like taking off a veil from the face of beauty. The fineſt needle ever poliſhed, and pointed by the moſt ingenious artiſt, appears, when it is viewed by the ſolar microſcope, quite obtuſe; while the ſting of a bee, however magnified, ſtill retains all its

its original acuteneſs of termination. The ſerrated border of the petal of a flower, and the fringe on the wing of a fly, diſplay an accuracy of delineation which no pencil ever yet could rival. The taſte of the floriſt has not, indeed, been much admired, or generally aſpired at; while that of the connoiſſeur in painting, is conſidered as a mark of elegance of character, and an honourable diſtinction. Yet, ſurely, it is an inconſiſtency to be tranſported with the workmanſhip of a poor mortal, and feel no raptures in ſurveying thoſe highly finiſhed pictures, in which it is eaſy to trace the finger of the Deity.

The poets have given us moſt luxuriant deſcriptions of gardens and of rural ſcenery; and though they are thought by ſome to have exceeded reality, they have indeed ſcarcely equalled it. Enter a modern ſhrubbery, formed of a ſelection of the moſt agreeable flowering ſhrubs, and conſider, whether there is any thing in the garden of Alcinous, in the fields of Elyſium, in Milton's Paradiſe, to be compared with the intermixture of the lilac, the ſyringa, the laburnum, the double-bloſſomed cherry, peach, and almond; the rubinia, the jeſſamine, the moſs-roſe, the magnolia, and a great number of others, leſs common, but not of greater, though perhaps of equal, beauty. As we walk under cluſters of flowers, white as ſnow, tinged with gold, purple as the grape, blue as the expanſe of heaven, and bluſhing like the cheek of youth, we are led to imagine ourſelves in fairy land, or in another and a better world; where every delicate ſenſe is delighted, and all around breathes fragrance, and expands beauty; where the heart ſeems to participate in the joy of laughing Nature. Groves and gardens have, indeed, been always ſuppoſed to ſoothe the mind into a placid temper, peculiarly favourable to the indulgence of contemplation.

The excellent taſte which now prevails in gardening, uſually combines the ſhrubbery and the grove. The tall trees of the foreſt conſtitute the back ground in the living landſcape, and the ſhrubs, beneath and before them, form the underwood, in a delightful reſemblance to the natural coppice, and the uncultivated

vated foreſt. The plane tree is one of the firſt beauties among thoſe which are now moſt frequently planted in our gardens. Its large leaf, and permanent verdure, render it peculiarly fitted to afford a ſhade. I always conſider it as a claſſical tree, for the antient writers often mention it; and ſome of the fineſt philoſophical dialogues of antiquity paſſed under the cool retreat of its broad and vivid foliage. Socrates ſought no other theatre than the turf that grew under the plane tree, on the banks of the Iliſſus. The weeping-willow, that droops over the babbling ſtream, conſtitutes one of thoſe fine beauties which partake of the melancholy and romantic. Such, indeed, are the charms of its luxuriant branches, that, when properly ſituated, it is of itſelf an enchanting picture. Beautiful as are all the features of the modern garden, I ſhould not heſitate to allot the firſt place in an eſtimate of horticultural graces to the weeping-willow. The weeping birch is at all times pleaſing, and a moſt delightful object in winter. Obſerve yonder tall ſtem, riſing from the interſtices of a craggy rock, covered with a rind white and gloſſy like ſilver, and drooping with ten thouſand fine twigs, ſo attenuated as to appear almoſt capillary. View it when ſprinkled with hoar froſt, or with ſnow, and if you have a ſoul capable of being charmed with natural beauty, you will be ſenſibly affected at the ſight with a ſweet complacency. An old oak is not often found in our gardens becauſe of its tardy vegetation; but whenever it appears in them, it produces all the effect of graceful majeſty, and one may contemplate it for hours with ſtill new delight. The delicate acacia, the conical poplar of Lombardy, the flowery cheſnut, the ſoft lime, the elegant mountain aſh, the aſpiring fir, the gloſſy laurel, theſe all form ſo various and delightful pictures, that while I am permitted to expatiate over the lawn, and penetrate the mazes of the wood and garden, I ſhall not repine that it is not my lot to ſaunter in the picture galleries of a palace.

The taſte for plantation prevails greatly in this country, and it ought to be encouraged, as it is a never-failing ſource of pleaſure to the planter, and of improvement to the community. But it is to be hoped, that

while

while we plant the tree for ornament, we shall not forget to drop the acorn, and raise that heart of oak, which bears an analogy to the bravery of the people; and has ever been to this land, *et præsidium et decus*, both a bulwark and a beauty.

No. CXVIII. ON THE CHARACTER OF ADDISON AS A POET.

THE lustre of a great name not only sets off real beauties to the greatest advantage, but adds a grace to deformity, and converts a defect to an excellence. The enthusiastical admirers of a favourite author, like ardent lovers, view those objects with rapture, which cause in others indifference or disgust. Without considering the inequalities of the same genius, and the diversities of subjects, they are led to conclude, from the excellence of one part of an author's works, that all are excellent; and that whatever bears his signature, is genuine wit, and just taste.

I know not whether even Mr. Addison, who is so deservedly esteemed the honour of our nation, was not indebted for a small part of his reputation to the blind bigotry of prejudice. On any other supposition, I know not how he could have been admired as a very eminent poet. The dispassionate temperature which constituted a solid judgment, and qualified him for the cool disquisitions of criticism and morality, rendered him incapable of that animated spirit which is the soul of poetry. But the reader is unwilling to believe, that so accurate a critic, and so correct a writer, is himself faulty; and, therefore, when he passes from his prose to his poetry, and observes a manifest inferiority and deficiency of merit in the latter, he rather inclines to distrust his own judgment than the abilities of the author. Reader after reader has toiled through the same dull rhimes, perhaps blind to their faults, or, if sensible of their defects, yet inclined to join in their praise, in opposition to

to conviction, from a dread of the imputation of a depraved taste. Had not a veneration for his name prevented critics from speaking their real sentiments, though Addison would, as a moral essayist, most justly have been called the Socrates, Plato, or Xenophon of his age; yet he would never have been esteemed the first of poets.

It would be injustice, while we inspect these volumes, to pass over in silence, the elegant poem which is prefixed to the works of Addison, on the death of their author. The melancholy flow of the verse is well adapted to express the tenderness of the sentiments. The beauty of the imagery, and the energy of the expression, entitle this little piece to a very respectable rank among the elegiac compositions of the English writers. It was for a long time little regarded; but the attention lately paid to it, and the commendations bestowed on it, are proofs that literary merit, however unnoticed for a time, through accident, prejudice, or party, is sure to receive the applause it deserves from impartial posterity.

At the end of the verses of Addison to Mr. Dryden, we are told, that the author was but twenty-two years of age when he wrote them. Whether the age was affixed to extenuate the imperfections, or to enhance the merits of the poem, certain it is, that both these intentions are frustrated by its extreme insignificance and futility. The production is unworthy the age of twenty-two. Mr. Pope is known to have written his pastorals, which infinitely exceed the versification of Addison, at sixteen. And Milton acquired an elegance in Latin verse at an earlier period. The thoughts in this piece are not striking, the style is contemptible, and the negligence in the rhime alone would, in the present refinement of taste, consign the work to oblivion.

That all his pieces are upon a level with this, cannot be asserted. That some of them abound with grand conceptions, and have many good lines, must be confessed. But allowing Addison all the merit in his poetry, which candour, or even partiality in his favour can allow, he never can be justly esteemed one of the first poets of the nation. I never heard that Socrates increased

increaſed his fame by his poetical verſion of Æſop's Fables, and the beſt proſe-writer in the beſt age of Rome wrote the line, "*O fortunatam, natam, me conſule, Romam.*" The truth is, nature uſually beſtows her gifts with a prudent liberality even to her favourites. One might on this occaſion apply Martial's, "*Hoc Ciceronis habes.*" This character of a bad poet you have in common with the great Cicero.

To oppoſe opinions univerſally received, is to incur the imputation of vanity, ignorance, and want of taſte. But as every individual has a right to private judgment, and may offer his ſentiments to others, while he does it with modeſty, profeſſes a poſſibility of miſtake, and keeps his mind open to conviction, I have ventured to advance an opinion againſt the poetical merit of Addiſon; regardleſs how it may alarm thoſe who ſubmit their judgments to the direction of others, and who pay an implicit obedience to authority.

No. CXIX. THE FOLLY OF BRINGING UP CHILDREN TO A LEARNED PROFESSION, WITHOUT THE PROBABILITY OF PROVIDING THEM WITH A COMPETENCY.

THAT admiration is the effect of ignorance, is a truth univerſally confeſſed; and nothing ſo forcibly excites the wonder of the illiterate Plebeian, as the character of profound erudition.

Dazzled by the ſplendor of literary honours, many an honeſt parent has prevented his ſon from acquiring a fortune behind the counter, to ſee him ſtarve in a pulpit.

Theſe reflections were occaſioned by meeting an old friend at a coffee-houſe one evening laſt week. His looks were meagre, his dreſs ſhabby, and he ſufficiently apologized for the ruſtineſs of his coat, by the following narrative:

"My father," said he, after some preliminary conversation, "was a shoemaker of tolerable business in "London; a very honest man, and very much given to "reading godly books, whenever he could steal a "moment from the lap-stone and the last. As I was "the only child, he took great delight in me, and "used frequently to say, that he hoped in time to see "me Archbishop of Canterbury, and no such great "matters neither; for as to my parentage, I was as "good as many a one that had worn a mitre; and he "would make me as good a *scholard* too, or it should "go hard with him.

"My destination to the church was thus unalterably "fixed before I was five years old; and in consequence "of it, I was put to a grammar-school in the city, "whence, after a thousand perils of the cane, and perils "of the rod, I went to the University on an exhibition "of fifteen pounds a year, which my father obtained "from one of the city companies, with no small difficulty. So scanty an allowance would by no means "defray the enormous expence of university education; "and my father, whose pride would not let me appear meaner than my companions, very readily "agreed to pay me forty pounds out of the yearly "profits of his trade, and to debar himself many innocent gratifications, in order to accomplish in me the "grand object of all his ambition.

"In consequence of my father's desire, that I should "complete the full term of academical education, I did "not go into orders till I was of seven years standing, "and had taken the degree of Master of Arts. I was "therefore incapable of receiving any pecuniary "emoluments from my studies, till I was six and "twenty. Then, however, I was resolved to make a "bold push, and to free my father from the burthen "of supporting me with half the profits of his labours. "The old man was eager that I should attempt to get "some kind of preferment; not, as he would generously say, that he wanted to withdraw his assistance, "but that he thought it was high time to begin to look "up at the Bishoprick.

"I hastened

" I haſtened to London as the moſt ample field for " the diſplay of my abilities, and the acquiſition of " money and fame. Soon after my arrival, I heard of " a vacant Lectureſhip; and though I was an entire " ſtranger to every one of the pariſhioners, I reſolved " to truſt my cauſe to honeſt endeavours, and a ſedu- " lous canvaſs. I ſhall not trouble you with an enu- " meration of the ſeveral indignities I ſuffered (for I " had not loſt my univerſity pride), from being under " the neceſſity to addreſs, with the moſt abject ſuppli- " cation, chandlers, barbers, and green-grocers. Suf- " fice it to acquaint you, that myſelf, and another " young clergyman of regular education, appeared, " on the day of election, to have but ſeventeen votes " between us; and that a methodiſtical enthuſiaſt, who " had once been a carpenter, bore away the prize " with a majority of a hundred and twenty.

" Though diſappointed, I was not dejected; and I " applied to a certain Rector for his Curacy, the " duty of which, conſiſted in prayers twice a day, " a ſermon on Sundays, and innumerable burials, " chriſtenings, and weddings. I thought myſelf happy, " however, in being offered forty guineas a year, with- " out ſurplus, or ſurplice fees; but how was I chagrined, " on being told by the Rector, on the very firſt Sunday " I went to officiate, that I need not trouble myſelf, as " another gentleman had undertaken the whole duty " at forty pounds!

" I waited now a conſiderable time in expectation of " ſomething to fall; but heard of nothing in which " there was the leaſt probability of ſucceſs, unſupported, " as I was by friends, and unknown to fame. At laſt, " I was informed by an acquaintance, that a certain " Clergyman in the city was about to reſign his " Lectureſhip, and that he would probably reſign in my " favour, if I were early enough in my application. " I made all the haſte I poſſibly could to reach this " gentleman before his reſignation; and found very " little difficulty in perſuading him to intercede in my " favour. In ſhort, his endeavours, joined to my own, " ſecured the Lectureſhip, and I was unanimouſly cho- " ſen. The electors, however, expreſſed a deſire, that

"I would quit my place of reſidence, which was "a long way off, and live in the pariſh. To this "requeſt I conſented; and immediately fixed myſelf in "a decent family, where I lodged and boarded for "fifty pounds a year; and as I was not ſo ambitious "as my father, I congratulated myſelf on the happy "event, and ſat down contented and ſatisfied. But, "alas! how was I confounded, when my collectors "brought the annual contribution, to find it amount "to no more than an exact ſum of twenty-one pounds "two ſhillings and three-pence three-farthings! I was "under the immediate neceſſity of diſcharging my "lodging, reſigning my preferment, and quietly de-"camping with the loſs of no inconſiderable ſum.

"Thus, Sir, ſaid he, "have I now for theſe "twenty years been toſſed about in the world, without "any fixed reſidence, and without any certain proſpect "of my bread. I muſt not however complain, as I "am well aſſured there are many in the metropolis "in ſituations very ſimilar to mine. Yet ſometimes, "I own, I cannot help being fooliſh enough to ima-"gine, that I might, perhaps, have been happier, "and I am ſure I could have been richer, had I been "brought up to my paternal awl and laſt. My poor "father died about two years ago, and I have reaſon "to think, his diſappointment and ſorrow for my ill-"ſucceſs haſtened his diſſolution.

"I now ſupport myſelf tolerably well in the capacity "of, what the world ludicrouſly calls, a Hackney "Parſon. And though I do not get quite ſo much "as a journeyman ſhoemaker, I make ſhift to keep "ſoul and body together; and I thank God for that. "If, Sir, you could recommend me, here is my ad-"dreſs, up four pair of ſtairs."——

He was proceeding, but he had too powerfully ex-cited my ſympathy; and after conſoling him to the beſt of my power, I took my leave of him, not without ſevere reflections on thoſe parents who, to indulge a childiſh vanity, bring up their offspring to miſery and want.

No.

No. CXX. ON DECENCY, AS THE ONLY MOTIVE OF OUR APPARENT VIRTUES, AND PARTICULARLY OF OUR RELIGIOUS BEHAVIOUR.

WHATEVER may be the vices of this age, it cannot be said to be particularly distinguished by hypocrisy. Selfishness reigns triumphant; and men, for the most part, pursue whatever they think conducive to their own pleasure or interest, without regarding appearances, or the opinions of others, except, indeed, when their interest or their pleasure are immediately concerned.

Even they who fill offices of confidence and honour in the community, are, in this age, fond of divesting themselves of that external dignity with which the wisdom of our ancestors judged it right to surround them. They descend with a peculiar kind of pride from their natural or political eminence, and will not even display the appearance of those virtues and abilities which are absolutely necessary in their offices and stations. They ostentatiously exhibit a carelessness and profligacy in their conversation and behaviour, which, if they really possess, ought to displace them from their rank, and strip them of their blushing honours.

In those who fill public offices, or who are fixed in the more important professions, a regard to external decency is itself a virtue. But, in truth, if the present disordered state of things would permit, none ought to fill those offices and professions, whose regard to decency does not arise from a regard to virtue.

There are, indeed, many who are esteemed good sort of persons, but whose goodness is unprincipled, and appears to arise solely from a regard to external decorum, or, what is called, the saving of appearances. And this motive, poor and contemptible as it is, in comparison with rational principles arising from conviction,

viction, is very often the only avowed motive for the regular performance of all external duties; but more particularly of thoſe which concern religion. The following imaginary tranſaction will, perhaps, ſuggeſt an idea of that poor and political decency which it is thought a very extraordinary effort of virtue to maintain. Let us then invent a ſcene of fiction by way of exemplification.

"We muſt have a Faſt Day ſoon," ſays the Stateſman, "for the Americans have had one already." "It is unneceſſary," replies the Privy Counſellor in the jockey dreſs, aiming at a wretched pun, "it is all a "farce." "Between friends," ſubjoins the Stateſman, "I am not fonder of ſuch formalities than you "are; but you know it is decent, and we muſt con"form, externally at leaſt, to the prejudices of the "mob." "It is decent, my Lord," re-echoes the bench of Biſhops.

"There is a Sermon preached to-day before the "Houſe of Lords," ſays a member; "True," ſays another, "but I vote it a *Bore*; and beſides, I am en"gaged to ſee a fine bitch pointer that I think of buy"ing;" "well," reſumes the other, "but let us make "a party of two or three to church, becauſe it is "decent." "We beg, my Lords," ſoftly whiſpers an epiſcopal voice, "you would not put yourſelves to the "ſmalleſt inconvenience, for half a dozen of us have "determined, though we have a thouſand engagements, "to poſtpone them an hour or two for the ſake of de"cency. Decency, my Lord, muſt ſuperſede every "conſideration." "Will you go to church, my Lord "Duke?" ſays one, lowly bowing to his patron, "No; I think it decent, but you will be there on "that account; and as I am engaged to-day at bil"liards, I muſt beg to be excuſed:——but I hope "there will be enough there to make a decent ap"pearance."

Among the gay ſenators of the Britiſh empire it has been obſerved, that very few, of late, have diſplayed in this inſtance even that ſubordinate virtue of which we ſpeak, a regard to external decency. Weſtminſter Abbey, indeed, is not a place to be frequented for pleaſure

pleaſure by thoſe who chiefly ſhine in the ſtand at a horſe-race. One or two officers however do attend a ſermon officially, and a few others for the ſake of decency; but the knowing-ones conſider the whole buſineſs, to expreſs their own ideas in their own language, as a curſed lounge. This buſineſs therefore, and many others of a moſt ſolemn, ſacred, and venerable nature, being conſidered merely as encumbrances by the jolly part, which is the greater part, they are utterly neglected, or attended by a few only, whoſe intereſt compels them to have a regard to decency.

Our religion teaches us to ſeparate one day out of ſeven for religious purpoſes. But many of the wiſe men who were born to be our Engliſh Solons and Lycurgi, or, in other words, who happen to be deſcended from peers, and therefore fit as hereditary legiſlators, conſider the inſtitution merely as a fooliſh ſuperſtition; and therefore ſpend the Sabbath, like the charming people abroad, at cards and in diſſipation, and very much lament thoſe groſs prejudices of the common people, which render it decent and prudent not to open the theatres, and enliven the horrid dullneſs of the Seventh Day by public diverſions. Even mighty good ſort of people, as they are uſually called, heſitate not to confeſs, that a regard to external decency is one of the chief motives of their regular conduct in obſerving the Sabbath, and other virtuous practices of our forefathers.

It would not be difficult to trace this motive of decency in many of the apparent virtues, which diſplay themſelves with no little oſtentation, in every department of human life. But it is really better to pay that deference to virtue which ariſes from aſſuming the appearances, than by impudent and avowed contempt of it, to injure others by the example. To have merely a regard to decency in common life, and in a wicked and unprincipled age, becomes, in ſome degree, virtuous. We will not, therefore, expoſe this unſound virtue to ſevere cenſure, except when it appears in religion, where, whatever appearances are inſincere, conſtitute hypocriſy of a moſt deteſtable kind; hypocriſy, founded on ſelf-intereſt. It is the man of *decent* character (and with this view alone he is decent), who

riſes

riſes to preferment, and then laughs in his lawn ſleeves at the humble Chriſtian in tattered crape, who is too ſincere to be political, too ſound in the inner man to want or admit the varniſh of the whited ſepulchre.

Pope has ſaid, that Secker was decent, and that Rundle had a heart. Whether the cenſure or the praiſe was juſt is not mine to determine. All I ſhall remark on the paſſage is, that though decency may ſmooth the way to courts, and inſinuate itſelf into the higheſt ſeats of preferment, it is a heart only which is capable of deriving, from the ſucceſs, a pure and ſolid ſatisfaction. Though decency without ſincerity may be approved by narrow politicians, and even gain the applauſe of the multitude by deceiving them, yet let not the hypocrite triumph, but remember, that there is one before whom all hearts are open, all deſires known, and from whom no ſecrets are hidden.

No. CXXI. ON THE ANIMOSITIES OCCASIONED IN THE COUNTRY BY THE GAME LAWS.

IN a late paper on the diſagreements of a country neighbourhood, I purpoſely omitted one of the moſt fruitful cauſes of them, intending to conſider it in a paper by itſelf, conſiſtently with its extenſive and important operation. I believe it will be allowed by all who have made remarks, that the individuals of this nation are more ſeriouſly and inveterately divided by diſputes about the Game, than by controverſies, which make much more noiſe in the world on the ſubjects of politics or religion. What remains among us of ſavageneſs and brutality is chiefly preſerved by the mean and ſelfiſh greedineſs of thoſe who poſſeſs a thouſand peculiar advantages, and who yet meanly contend for an excluſive right to deſtroy the Game; that uſufructuary property, which the Creator intended to be poſſeſſed by the firſt occupant, like the air, light, and water.

Some

Some reſtraints however of that kind, which tend to prevent the poor labourer from waſting his valuable time, might, perhaps, be neither unjuſt, nor, in any reſpect, attended with inconvenience. But the Game Laws, as they now ſubſiſt in England, are a diſgrace to the noble fabric of our free conſtitution. They are illiberal in their nature; they originated in ſlavery, and they lead to tyranny. It is remarked by Burn, and the great commentator on our legal ſyſtem, that, in one ſtatute only for the preſervation of Game, there are not leſs than ſix blunders in Grammar, beſides other miſtakes; ſo that one is led to conclude, that this part of our boaſted code was drawn up by a committee of booriſh country eſquires and ſtupid fox-hunters. Indeed, the whole body of the Game Laws is replete with perplexity, abſurdity, and contradiction. What can be more ridiculous, than that the legiſlature of a mighty empire ſhould require one hundred a year as a qualification to ſhoot a poor partridge, and only forty ſhillings to vote for a Senator? "There is another "offence," ſays Blackſtone, "ſo conſtituted by a "variety of acts of parliament, which are ſo numerous, "and ſo confuſed, and the crime itſelf of ſo queſtion-"able a nature, that I ſhall not detain the reader with "many obſervations thereupon. And yet it is an of-"fence which the ſportſmen of England ſeem to think "of the higheſt importance; and a matter, perhaps "the only one, of general and national concern: aſ-"ſociations having been formed all over the kingdom "to prevent its deſtructive progreſs; I mean the "offence of deſtroying ſuch beaſts and fowls as are "ranked under the denomination of Game." Upon the whole, it may be truly ſaid, that an Engliſhman, who has a regard for the honour of his country, and ſenſe enough to ſee the mean and arbitrary ſpirit of the Game Laws, and the nonſenſe of the Letter, muſt hide his face in confuſion, when he conſiders how much time and attention has been ſpent upon them by the Britiſh Legiſlature.

Rural diverſions certainly conſtitute a very pleaſing and proper amuſement for all ranks above the loweſt. Every man who has a juſt claim to the title of gen-

tleman, or, indeed, who is capable of ſpending his time in amuſement, without injuring the publick or his own family, ought to be ſuffered to partake of them. If he gives up his hours, his labour, and his thoughts to the purſuit, he has earned a right to the object, ſince the object is of a nature which cannot be appropriated while alive and at liberty. A fellow-creature is agreeably amuſed and benefited, and no man robbed, ſince the bird that flies in the air no more belongs to the tenant of the manſion-houſe, than the ſun-beam which equally ſhines on the cottage and the palace. Poor is the opulence, and little the grandeur, which ſhews a diſpoſition which would undoubtedly engroſs, if it were poſſible, the light and the air.

With reſpect to the matter of treſpaſs, it is certain, that a Lord of the Manor is no leſs liable to be proſecuted for it on his own manor than any other perſon, whether qualified or unqualified. It ſhews, therefore, the ignorance, as well as arbitrary diſpoſition of theſe petty princes, when they claim the privilege of prowling for prey, without controul, on their neighbour's land, and of excluding all others from their own. In ſhort, it is extremely doubtful what privileges the lord of the manor poſſeſſes; and whether he has a better right to hunt and ſhoot, without a particular grant from the king, than the meaneſt ſubject whom he bullies and browbeats. The contemptible laws which have been made on this buſineſs certainly want illuſtration and amendment. Indeed they ought to be torn out of the ſtatute book; and the memory of them, like that of feudal ignorance and ſlavery, execrated.

There is a practice particularly mean and oppreſſive, which very much prevails in this ſelfiſh age, among the engroſſers of that part of the creation which God and nature have conſtituted free as the ſeas and the winds. They do not conſider the purſuit of Game in the liberal light of a gentleman-like diverſion, but view the hare and the partridge as provender for the table at once genteel and cheap. They therefore ſeldom give themſelves the trouble to join in the chace, or carry the gun over the furrows; but ſelect ſome idle peaſant, who, by poaching, has acquired a ſkill in the arts of deſtroying

deſtroying Game; clothe him in green pluſh, and ſend him to provide pheaſants, and bid defiance to his ſuperiors, whenever the maſter has company to dine with him, and wiſhes to ſave an article in the butcher's account. This green-coated hero, who is uſually one of the greateſt ſcoundrels in the pariſh, ſallies forth under the protection of the lord or lady of the manor; and if he meets a curate, or an apothecary, or a reputable tradeſman, or even a neighbouring lord of the manor, boldly inſults them, threatens to ſhoot their dogs, or ſeize their fowling-pieces; and juſtifies all his inſolence by alleging, that what he does or ſays is all by his maſter's order. Appeal to that maſter, and, probably, the inſults are aggravated; or, if he pretends to uncommon affability, he will allow that the fellow is apt to be a little foul-mouthed; but, upon the whole, is a very faithful ſervant. The low wretch himſelf might, indeed, be puniſhed both for his treſpaſs and his ill-uſage; but though he inſulted his proſecutors in the field, he is ready, like all upſtart and petty potentates, to bend on his knees for mercy, and uſually diſarms the generous by pleading a wife and ſix children. I know not which ought to predominate, compaſſion for the poor deluded peaſant, or contempt for his employer. It is ſurely enough that the rich man claims an excluſive right to the commoners of nature himſelf; and he ought by no means to be ſuffered to commiſſion the loweſt plebeian to do that which he prohibits in gentlemen of the profeſſions; of fortunes as independent, if not ſo great, as his own, and of minds often much greater.

It is in the power of theſe hirelings, who ſeldom poſſeſs much principle, to involve all the country in animoſity. The landed gentry uſually poſſeſs a ſhare of pride fully proportionate to their eſtate and manſion-houſe. The hireling of one treſpaſſes on the dominions of another. Repriſals are made. Each defends his repreſentatives. One thinks himſelf as *good* (for that is the phraſe) as the other. No conceſſions can poſſibly be made. Hatred, of the bittereſt and moſt rancorous kind mutually takes poſſeſſion of theſe lords in miniature; and many a hunting would end, if vaſſals could be

be procured, like that of Chevy Chace, in a bloody battle.

If compaſſion did not intervene, one might be much entertained with ſo ludicrous an object, as that of creatures, who pretend to reaſon, benevolence, chriſtianity, and education, rendering their exiſtence mutually painful, by fierce quarrels, ſecret but venomous hatred, expenſive and vexatious litigations, occaſioned by objects of a nature truly trifling in themſelves, and which, allowing them every poſſible praiſe, can be called no more than innocent diverſions. Are we not ſtill children with all our beard and gravity about us, if we always play till we quarrel? Our conduct, in this reſpect, is almoſt too abſurd to admit of ſerious expoſtulation. It may furniſh ſcenes for mirth at a puppet-ſhew, or a farce at Bartholomew Fair.

However, I think it neceſſary, before I conclude this ſubject, to declare, for the ſake of avoiding the malignant miſrepreſentations of goſſips and ſcandal-dealers by profeſſion, that there are no alluſions in this paper either perſonal or local; and that I have not been pleading for a privilege in which I am intereſted, not being inclined to hunt, nor able to ſhoot.

I will beg leave to add one paſſage on the ſubject from Blackſtone, for the information of thoſe among ſportſmen, who are too tenacious of their excluſive rights, and who are able to read it.

"Another violent alteration of the Engliſh conſtitution, conſiſted in the depopulation of whole counties for the purpoſes of the King's royal diverſion; and ſubjecting both them, and all the antient foreſts of the kingdom to the unreaſonable ſeverity of Foreſt Laws, imported from the continent; whereby the ſlaughter of a beaſt was made almoſt as penal as the death of a man. In the Saxon times, though no man was allowed to kill or chaſe the King's deer, yet he might ſtart any game, purſue and kill it, upon his own eſtate. But the rigour of theſe new conſtitutions veſted the ſole property of all the Game in England in the King alone; and no man was allowed to diſturb any fowl of the air, or any beaſt of the field, of ſuch kinds as were ſpecially reſerved

" reſerved for the royal amuſement of the Sovereign, " without expreſs licence from the King, by the grant " of a chaſe or free warren: and whoſe franchiſes were " granted as much with a view to preſerve the breed " of animals, as to indulge the ſubject. From a ſimilar " principle to which, though the Foreſt Laws are now " mitigated, and by degrees grown entirely obſolete; " yet from this root has grown a baſtard ſlip, known " by the name of the Game Law, now arrived to, " and wantoning in, its higheſt vigour: both founded " upon the ſame unreaſonable notions of permanent pro- " perty in wild creatures; and both productive of the " ſame tyranny to the commons: but with this dif- " ference; that the Foreſt Laws eſtabliſhed only one " mighty hunter throughout the land, *the Game Laws* " *have raiſed a little Nimrod in every manor.* And in " one reſpect the antient law was much leſs unreaſon- " able than the modern; for the King's grantee of a " chaſe or free warren might kill game in every part of " his franchiſe; but now, though a freeholder of leſs " than one hundred a year is forbidden to kill a par- " tridge on his own eſtate, yet nobody elſe (not even " the lord of the manor, unleſs he hath a grant of free " warren) can do it without committing a treſpaſs, and " ſubjecting himſelf to an action."

No. CXXII. ON THE IMPORTANCE OF GOVERNING THE TEMPER.

NOTWITHSTANDING the many complaints of the calamities of human life, it is certain that more conſtant uneaſineſs ariſes from ill temper than from ill fortune, In vain has Providence beſtowed every external bleſſing, if care has not been taken by ourſelves to ſmooth the aſperities of the temper. A bad temper embitters every ſweet, and converts a paradiſe into a place of torment.

The government of the temper then, on which the happineſs of the human race ſo greatly depends, can never

never be too frequently, or too forcibly recommended. But as it was found by ſome of the antients one of the moſt efficacious methods of deterring young perſons from any diſagreeable or vicious conduct, to point out a living character in which it appeared in all its deformity, I ſhall exhibit a picture, in which I hope a bad temper will appear, as it really is, a moſt unamiable object.

It is by no means uncommon to obſerve thoſe, who have been flattered for ſuperficial qualities at a very early age, and engaged in ſo conſtant a ſeries of diſſipating pleaſure, as to leave no time for the culture of the mind, becoming, in the middle and advanced periods of life, melancholy inſtances of the miſerable effects reſulting from an ungoverned temper. A certain lady, whom I ſhall diſtinguiſh by the name of Hiſpulla, was celebrated from her infancy for a fine complexion. She had, indeed, no very amiable expreſſion in her eyes, but the vermillion of her cheeks did not fail to attract admiration, and ſhe was convinced by her glaſs, and by the aſſeverations of the young men, that ſhe was another and a fairer Helen. She had every opportunity of improving her mind; but as we naturally beſtow our firſt care on the quality which we moſt value, ſhe could never give her attention either to books or to oral inſtruction, and, at the age of fifteen or ſixteen, could ſcarcely write her name legibly, or read a ſentence without heſitation. Her perſonal charms were, however, powerful enough to captivate the heart of a thoughtleſs heir, very little older than herſelf. Her vanity, rather than her love, was gratified by the alliance; and when ſhe found the aſſiduities of promiſcuous ſuitors at an end, ſhe found herſelf gradually ſinking in the dead calm of inſipidity. When love was no more, other paſſions ſprung up with all the luxuriancy of rank weeds, in a ſoil where no ſalutary herb had been planted in the vernal ſeaſon. Pride, that fruitful plant, which bears every kind of odious quality in abundance, took root in her heart, and flouriſhed, like the nettle or the hemlock, on the banks of the ſtagnant pool.

Her huſband was the firſt to feel its baneful effects. Though the match was greatly to her advantage, ſhe perſuaded herſelf that ſhe might have done better; and that

that her good fortune was by no means adequate to the prize which her beauty and merit might have juſtly claimed. With this conviction, and without any habits or abilities which might lead her to ſeek amuſement in books, ſhe found no diverſion ſo congenial to her heart, as the tormenting a good-natured, young, and agreeable huſband, who, by marrying, had excluded her from the probability of a title. As a ſmall compenſation for the injury received, ſhe aſſumed an abſolute dominion over him, his fortune, and his family. He durſt not differ in opinion from her; for on the ſlighteſt oppoſition, her eyes dart fire, her cheeks glow with indignation, and her tongue utters every bitter word which rage and malice can dictate. The comfort of every meal is poiſoned by a quarrel; and an angry vociferation is re-echoed from the parlour to the kitchen, from the cellar to the garret, by night and by day, except in the awful and ominous pauſe of a ſullen ſilence.

The poor huſband, who with every amiable diſpoſition, poſſeſſed alſo the virtue of patience, bore the evil as long as human nature could bear it; but as years advanced, and her fury increaſed, he ſought a refuge at the tavern, and in the compoſing juice of the grape. Exceſs and vexation ſoon laid him in the only ſecure aſylum from the ſtings and arrows of an outrageous temper, the ſilent tomb.

The children, after ſuffering every ſpecies of perſecution which an angry, though fooliſhly fond mother, could inflict, no ſooner arrived at maturity, than they began to look for happineſs in an eſcape from home, where neither peace nor eaſe could find a place. The daughters married meanly, unworthily, and wretchedly, contented to take refuge from the rage of a furious mother in the arms of footmen and hair-dreſſers. The ſons ran away, and became vagrant and wretched debauchees; till, in mere deſpair, one of them entered as a ſoldier in the Eaſt India ſervice, and the other put an end to his own exiſtence.

The mother, after ſhedding a few natural tears, and wiping them ſoon, began to feel her pride and paſſion amply gratified in an abſolute dominion over an eſtate, a manſion-

a manſion-houſe, and a tribe of ſervants, whoſe dependant ſituation made them bear her fury with little reſiſtance. But ſhe enjoyed her reign but a ſhort time; for as her mind was incapable of reſting on itſelf for ſupport, ſhe ſought relief from the bottle of cordial; and, heated one day with a large draught, and a violent paſſion with one of the maids, ſhe burſt a blood veſſel, and expired in a ſcolding fit, her tongue ſtill quivering after her heart had ceaſed its pulſation.

I believe the originals of ſuch a picture as this, are much leſs common in the preſent age, than they were in the laſt century. Ladies were then ſecluded from the world till marriage, and as they were very ſuperficially educated in every thing but potting and preſerving, it is no wonder if they became termagants or viragos. They had no right idea of themſelves or the world around, and yielded, without oppoſition, to thoſe violent emotions, which ariſe, perhaps, in every mind when it is totally uncultivated.

Culture of the underſtanding, is, indeed, one of the beſt methods of ſubduing the heart to ſoftneſs, and redeeming it from that ſavage ſtate in which it too often comes from the hands of nature. The more our reaſon is ſtrengthened, the better ſhe is enabled to keep her ſeat on the throne, and to govern thoſe paſſions which were appointed to be her ſubjects; but which too often rebel, and ſucceed in their unnatural revolt. But, beſides the effect of mental culture, in calling forth and increaſing the powers of the reaſoning faculty, it ſeems to poſſeſs an influence in humanizing the feelings, and meliorating the native diſpoſition. Muſic, painting, and poetry, teach the mind to ſelect the agreeable parts of thoſe objects which ſurround us, and by habituating it to a pure and permanent delight, gradually ſuperinduce an habitual good humour. It is of infinite importance to happineſs to accuſtom the mind, from infancy, to turn from deformed and painful ſcenes, and to contemplate whatever can be found of moral and natural beauty. The ſpirits, under this benign management, contract a milkineſs, and learn to flow all cheerily in their ſmooth and yielding channels; while on the contrary, if the young mind is teazed, fretted, and neglected, the paſſages of the ſpirits become rugged,

rugged, abrupt, exaſperated, and the whole nervous ſyſtem ſeems to acquire an exceſſive irritability. The ill treatment of children has not only made them wretched at the time, but wretched for life; tearing the fine contextures of their nerves, and roughening, by example, and by ſome ſecret and internal influence, the very conſtitution of their tempers.

So much of the happineſs of private life, and the virtues of mothers and daughters, in particular, depends on the government of the temper, that the temper ought to be a principal object of regard in a well-conducted education. The ſuffering of children to tyrannize, without controul, over ſervants and inferiors is, I am convinced, the ruin of many an amiable diſpoſition. The virtues of humanity, benevolence, humility, cannot be too early enforced; at the ſame time care ſhould be taken, that an infant of two or three years old ſhould never be beat or ſpoken to harſhly for any offence which it can poſſibly commit. In ſhort, let every method be uſed which reaſon, religion, prudence, and experience can ſuggeſt, to accompliſh the purpoſe of ſweetening the temper, and baniſhing the furies from ſociety. May the endeavours be ſucceſsful; and may we only read, that there have, indeed, been ſuch animals as ſhrews and viragos, but that the breed is extinct in England, like the breed of wolves!

I have been much pleaſed with the lovely picture of Serena, in Mr. Hayley's inſtructive poem, the Triumphs of Temper; and I cannot conclude, without earneſtly entreating the ladies to view it as a looking-glaſs, by which they may learn to dreſs their minds in a manner which can never be out of faſhion; but which will enable them to ſecure, as well as extend, their conqueſts; and to charm, even when the lillies and roſes are all withered. If the poem ſhould effect its very laudable purpoſe, the Virtues, the Muſes, and the Graces, ſhould unite to form a wreath for the poet's brow, and hail him as the reſtorer of a golden age. While every mother, wife, and daughter, aſpires at the virtues of a Serena, let Alecto, Megæra, and Tiſiphone, be confined in chains to the infernal regions, and forbidden ever more to ariſe and aſſume the ſhape of a Britiſh lady!

No. CXXIII. ON THE MORAL EFFECTS OF A GOOD TRAGEDY.

IT is with regret I obſerve, that a taſte for the nobleſt part of theatrical amuſements, the repreſentation of tragedy, is rather on the decline. It ſtrongly marks the frivolity of an age, when the buſkin is excluded for the ſock, and the public attention too much engaged by dancers, ſingers, and harlequins, to admit the ſerious, yet lively pleaſures, of the Tragic Muſe.

There ſeems to me to be no method more effectual for ſoftening the ferocity, and improving the minds, of the lower claſſes of a great capital, than the frequent exhibition of tragical pieces, in which the diſtreſs is carried to the higheſt extreme, and the moral at once ſelf-evident, affecting, and inſtructive. The multitudes of thoſe who cannot read, or, if they could, have neither time nor abilities for deriving much advantage from reading, are powerfully impreſſed, through the medium of the eyes and ears, with thoſe important truths, which, while they illuminate the underſtanding, correct and mollify the heart. Benevolence, juſtice, heroiſm, and the wiſdom of moderating the paſſions, are plainly pointed out, and forcibly recommended to thoſe ſavage ſons of uncultivated nature, who have few opportunities, and would have no inclination for inſtruction, if it did not preſent itſelf under the form of a delightful amuſement. The human heart in general, whether it beats in the boſom of him who has been improved by education, or of the neglected child of poverty, is taught to exerciſe ſome of its moſt amiable propenſities by the indulgence of commiſeration in ſcenes of fancied woe. Were the Theatre under certain regulations, a man might go to it as he goes to church, to learn his duty; and it might juſtly be honoured with the appellation, which it has often aſſumed, and be called the ſchool of Virtue.

There are certainly a thouſand tragedies of more claſſical merit, but few better calculated to ſave the numerous

numerous and important classes of the plebeian order from wallowing in vice, theft, intemperance, and wretchedness of every kind, than the tragedy of George Barnwell. Common and illiterate minds cannot follow the high flights of sublime poetry, nor understand the beauties of blank verse; but the language of Lillo in this humble tale, is level to the lowest degree of intellect. It must, indeed give pleasure to every friend of unassuming merit, to find the due tribute of applause paid to the modest Lillo by one of the best of all modern judges, the Critic and Philosopher of Salisbury. He, whose taste was formed on the purest models, and corrected by the strictest rules, has not hesitated to place the Fatal Curiosity in the very first rank of dramatic compositions. And George Barnwell, however it may be affectedly despised by the silly votaries of fashion, who abominate it as low, deserves no less to be esteemed for its moral excellence, than the other for its classical. It has, perhaps, saved as many from an ignominious end, as the Beggar's Opera has hastened to it. That any moralist, or man of observation, can entertain a doubt concerning the effect on the upper gallery of a play in which thieves and harlots are represented as amiable and innocent characters, and all the rest of society as rogues, evinces, in this instance, an ignorance of human nature. The representation of the Beggars Opera is not only an outrage on civilized society, but an extreme act of cruelty to those wretched boys and girls, who have been allured to the paths of destruction, by viewing them thus strewed with artificial flowers. Take away the disgrace, the shame, and the first fine sensibilities of timid vice, and you remove a restraint, the force of whose operation neither precepts nor laws can ever supply. Suppose a country lad, with all his native modesty about him, allured to the Theatre by the Beggars Opera. In a few hours he undergoes a perfect metamorphosis. He thinks himself illuminated, and despises the honest old folks at home, who have hitherto confined him, as he supposes, in childish ignorance. His perverted ambition takes an unfortunate turn; and if he arrives not at the honour of dying like a Macheath, he will at least endeavour to deserve

deſerve it. Such, I am well aſſured, is often a true caſe; but even the miſerable creatures who are far gone in the paths which lead through villainy to ruin, may be called back by the melancholy tale of poor George Barnwell. There are many other Tragedies in the Engliſh language which convey admirable morals to the lower claſſes, and have undoubtedly reſcued many a wretch, who was deaf to a parent's voice and a preacher's admonition, from the dominion of an evil ſpirit.

But, indeed, there is no claſs of the people, however refined and poliſhed, which may not receive ſuch benefits from a well-written Tragedy, as ſcarcely any other mode of inſtruction can afford. He who has entered into all the feelings of a Shakeſpeare, an Otway, a Rowe, an Addiſon, may be ſaid to have aſſimilated with their ſouls, and ſnatched a ſacred ſpark, which cannot fail to kindle ſomething in himſelf reſembling the etherial fire of true genius. His nature will be improved, and a ſpecies of wiſdom and elevation of ſpirit, which was in vain ſought for in academic groves, may at laſt be imbibed in the Theatres. Philoſophy may catch a warmth of the drama which is capable of advancing it to nobler heights than ſhe would otherwiſe have attained. Socrates, whoſe benevolence and wiſdom appeared to have ſomething of divinity, was the voluntary aſſiſtant of Euripides in the compoſition of his tragedies; and undoubtedly was of opinion, that he taught philoſophy to inſtruct the herd of mankind in the moſt effectual manner, when he introduced her to their notice in the buſkin.

Inſtructing, entertaining, animating, and ennobling, as is the ſpirit of the tragic muſe, is it not wonderful that many can ſlight its efficacy, or view its fine productions on the ſtage with perfect inſenſibility? Yet, he who ſurveys the ſeats in the theatre where opulence and faſhion take their place, will find many a painted and powdered figure of both ſexes, which appears to view a Lear, a Shore, a Hamlet, and a Harlequin, with the ſame heavy eye; nor ſhews one emotion, except it be of laughter, while nature is moſt powerfully attracting the ſacred fountain of tears, wherever it has not

not been closed by affectation, by a natural or an acquired stupidity. It seems, indeed, to be a part of the contemptible vanity which characterizes the age, to laugh at public spectacles when others are serious, and to be serious when others laugh. "Who, indeed," says the fine bred lady, "would be sincerely affected by "any thing said or done by the low creatures on the "stage?"

Some spectators, on the other hand, lose all the effect of the piece by attending to the identical men and women who act, rather than to the characters which they represent. They also admire Mr. or Mrs. such an one's coat, gown, cap, shoe, leg, or hand, but forget the hero and the heroine, the poet, and the poem.

The taste for ridicule, which greatly prevails in a mean, selfish, debauched, and trifling age, contributes to prevent the genuine effect of Tragedy. Great laughers are seldom susceptible of deep or serious impressions. While the dead lie scattered on the stage, and every thing is presented to the view which ought to excite pity and terror, the joker dissipates the sweet sorrow of sympathy by the introduction of a ludicrous idea. Ridicule, indeed, seems to become a weapon in the hands of the wicked, destructive of taste, feeling, morality, and religion.

The addition of a ludicrous epilogue, a farce, pantomime entertainment, and of dances between the acts, has often been lamented as destructive of the effects of the finest tragedy. It is true, that they who live to please, must please in order to live; and therefore the players and their managers are not culpable. They must not only provide manly amusements for men, but childish diversions for children and school-boys. These entertainments have, indeed, often that ingenuity and drollery in them, which may, at a proper season, relax the most rigid philosophy. I censure not the things themselves, but the time of their introduction. After the soul has been deeply impressed with serious and virtuous sentiments, it is surely lamentable, that every mark should be effaced by harlequins and buffoons. It must be remembered, that I am speaking only of the moral effects of the drama,

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and I believe every one will agree, that these would be more successfully produced, if the entertainment, as it is called by way of eminence, preceded the Tragedy. The spectator would then retire to his pillow with his fancy full of fine poetic images, and his heart glowing with every elevated idea of moral rectitude. But now, his feelings are so trifled with and tantalized, that at last he grows callous to the tendereſt pathos, and attends the theatre merely as a critic in acting, instead of an interested partaker in the scenes which pass in review.

In times, when manly minds are necessary to save a sinking empire, and retard the decline of a degenerating people, every mode of improving the hearts of the community at large, in the serious and severer virtues, ought to be applied with avidity. The Theatre opens a fine school for the accomplishment of this end; and it would certainly contribute greatly to accelerate the general improvement, if there were less singing, dancing, and buffoonery, and more Tragedy. But some great man, by which epithet I mean, in this place, a titled and fashionable man, must set the example of admiring it, or else all the muses themselves might rack their inventions in composing the melancholy tale, with no other effect than that of diffusing sleep or smiles throughout Pit, Box, and Gallery.

No. CXXIV. ON THE INFLUENCE OF POLITICS, AS A SUBJECT OF CONVERSATION, ON THE STATE OF LITERATURE.

IT is a mark of the social and public spirit of this nation, that there is scarcely a member of it who does not bestow a very considerable portion of his time and thoughts in studying its political welfare, its interest, and its honour. Though this general taste for politics, from the highest to the lowest orders of the people, has afforded subjects for comic ridicule, yet I cannot

I cannot help conſidering it both as a proof of uncommon liberality, and as one of the firmeſt ſupports of civil liberty. It kindles and keeps alive an ardent love of freedom. It has hitherto preſerved that glorious gift of God from the rude hand of tyranny, and tends, perhaps, more than any other cauſe, to communicate the noble fire of true patriotiſm to the boſoms of poſterity. While we watch vigilantly over every political meaſure, and communicate an alarm through the empire, with a ſpeed almoſt equal to the ſhock of electricity, there will be no danger leſt a king ſhould eſtabliſh deſpotiſm, even though he were to invade the rights of his people at the head of his ſtanding army.

But as zeal without knowledge is ſubverſive of the purpoſe which it means to promote; it becomes a true friend to his country to endeavour to unite with the love of liberty, the love of knowledge. It unfortunately happens, that political ſubjects are of ſo warm and animating a nature, that they not only appear to intereſt, in a very high degree, but to engroſs the attention. The newſpapers form the whole library of the politician, the coffee-houſe is his ſchool, and he prefers the Gazette, and an acrimonious pamphlet, for or againſt the miniſtry, to all that was ever written by a Homer, or diſcovered by a Newton.

To be a competent judge either of political meaſures or events, it is neceſſary to poſſeſs an enlightened underſtanding, and the liberal ſpirit of philoſophy; it is neceſſary to have read hiſtory, and to have formed right ideas of the nature of man and of civil ſociety. But I know not how it happens, the moſt ignorant and paſſionate are apt to be the moſt deciſive in delivering their ſentiments on the very complicated ſubjects of political controverſy. A man, whoſe education never extended beyond writing and the four rules, will determine at once, and with the moſt authoritative air, ſuch queſtions as would perplex the wiſeſt ſtateſman adorned with all human learning, and aſſiſted by the experience and advice of the moſt cultivated perſons in the nation. Even gentlemen, according to the common acceptation of that title, or thoſe who have fortunes, and have received the common inſtruction

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of the times, are ſeldom able to judge with propriety in politics, though they are uſually inclined to dictate with paſſion. Is it poſſible that, from having learnt only the firſt elements of Latin and French, and the arts of dancing, fencing, and fiddling, in perfection, a man ſhould be qualified, I do not ſay to ſit as a Senator, but to expatiate, with ſufficient judgment and intelligence, on the propriety and nature of any public tranſaction, or ſyſtem of government? But he is worth an eſtate of a thouſand a year, and therefore, though all his other merit, in kind and degree, may be like that of a maſter of the ceremonies, or that of a ſkilful groom and whipper in, he thinks he has a right to give law to the neighbourhood in political converſation. His ideas are confined to narrow limits; and as his patriotiſm is for the moſt part ſpite, ſo his ſupport of a miniſtry is, in ſome reſpects, ſelf-intereſt. It muſt be ſo; for a man, whoſe mind is not enlarged and cultivated, cannot entertain ſo liberal a ſyſtem of opinions as thoſe of real patriotiſm.

But even, among perſons whoſe minds are ſufficiently improved to diſtinguiſh and purſue the good of man and of ſociety, independently either of paſſion or of private advantage, the rage for politics often proceeds too far, and abſorbs all other objects. In vain does the hand of art preſent the picture or repeat the melody of muſic; for the eye is blind, the ear is deaf to all but the news and the newſpaper. Poetry, philology, elegant and polite letters, in all their ramifications, diſplay their alluring charms in vain to him, whoſe head and heart ſtill vibrate with the harſh and diſcordant ſounds of a political diſpute at the tavern. Thoſe books, whoſe tendency is only to promote elegant pleaſures or advance ſcience, which flatter no party, and gratify no malignant paſſion, are ſuffered to fall into oblivion; while a pamphlet, which eſpouſes the cauſe of any political men or meaſures, however inconſiderable its literary merit, is extolled as one of the firſt productions of modern literature. But meagre is the food furniſhed to the mind of man by the declamation of a party bigot. From a taſte for traſh, and a diſreliſh of the wholeſome food of the mind, and from the

the conſequent neglect of ſolid learning, mere politicians are prevented from receiving valuable improvement; and the community, together with literature, is at laſt deeply injured. For when learning is little reſpected, it will naturally decline; and that the mental darkneſs conſequent on its decline, leads to the eſtabliſhment of deſpotiſm, every one who has ſurveyed the pictures of mankind, as pourtrayed by the pencil of hiſtory, will immediately acknowledge. What did Athens and Rome retain of their antient dignity when their learning and their arts were no more? That the light of learning ſhould ever again be extinguiſhed, may appear a viſionary idea to an Engliſhman; but ſo it did to a Roman, in the days of Cicero. Notwithſtanding the multiplication of books by the art of printing, both they, and all value for them, may vaniſh, together with the power of underſtanding them, if the fury of politics ſhould occaſion a contempt for letters and for education, and ſhould convert the leaders of a people into Goths and Vandals.

He who would add an elegance to politics, and diſtinguiſh his converſation on the ſubject from the vociferation of porters in an alehouſe, ſhould inſpect the finiſhed pieces of antiquity, and learn to view public acts and counſels in the light in which they appeared to thoſe whom the world has long conſidered as ſome of the beſt and politeſt teachers of political wiſdom. If he poſſeſſes not taſte enough to reliſh the works of poetical imagination, let him confine himſelf to ſuch authors as Thucydides and Xenophon, Polybius and Plutarch, Livy and Salluſt. Politics will aſſume new grace by communicating with hiſtory and philoſophy; and political converſation, inſtead of a vague, paſſionate, and declamatory effuſion of undigeſted ideas, will become a moſt liberal exerciſe of the faculties, and form a mental banquet, at which the beſt and wiſeſt of mankind might indulge their finer appetites with inſatiable avidity. What can conſtitute a more rational object of contemplation than the noble fabric of ſociety, civilized by arts, letters, and religion? What can better employ our ſagacity, than to deviſe modes for its improvement and preſervation?

Not only the underſtanding, the taſte, the temper of a people, but the ſpirit alſo, will be greatly improved by learning politics of the Greeks and Romans. No man of feeling ever yet read Livy without learning to deteſt ſlavery, and to glow with a love and emulation of public virtue. The Greek and Roman ſpirit cannot be too much encouraged by thoſe who have a juſt idea of the dignity of a true Engliſhman, and deſire to maintain it. And let it be remembered, that the Athenians, in their moſt glorious periods, were as much attached to politics and news as Britons ever were; but that they preſerved, amidſt the warmeſt conteſts, a refined taſte and delicate paſſion for the politeſt learning, and the profoundeſt philoſophy.

No. CXXV. ON BUFFOONERY IN CONVERSATION.

IT is ſweet, ſays the agreeable poet of Venuſium, to lay aſide our wiſdom, and to indulge, on a proper occaſion, a ſpecies of temporary folly. He, indeed, muſt be outrageouſly ſevere, who would prohibit any pleaſing mode of paſſing our leiſure hours, while it is conſiſtent with innocence, and the nature of a being eminently diſtinguiſhed by the fine faculties of reaſon, fancy, memory, and reflection. Charming is the ſocial hour when ſolidity of judgment is enlivened by brilliancy of wit, and the lively ſallies of imagination by a ſweet interchange of penſive gravity. Eaſe, freedom, and the unſtudied effuſion of the ſentiments which naturally ariſe in cultivated minds, form a very delightful recreation; and diſmiſs the mind to its ſerious employments with new alacrity. Thoſe among the antients, who were moſt celebrated for their wiſdom, were remarkable for a cheerful and equable gaiety, and often diverted themſelves, in their intervals of ſeverer meditation, with jeſts and drollery. Who more cheerful than the gentle Socrates? Who more delighted with a joke than the dignified Cicero? But, at the ſame time,

time, few were equally capable of maintaining a legitimate converſation in all its gravity and elegance. The converſations of Socrates, preſerved by his eloquent diſciples, breathe a wiſdom approaching to divine; and Cicero's book, *de Oratore*, is one of the nobleſt monuments of poliſhed urbanity, as are many of his philoſophical pieces of ſpeculative wiſdom.

But there prevails, at preſent, a taſte for low and noiſy mirth, which totally precludes all delicacy of ſentiment, all exerciſe of reaſon and invention, and almoſt degrades us to the level of thoſe ludicrous animals, whom nature has rendered ſo wonderfully expert in the art of mimickry. Many perſons, who imagine themſelves remarkably endowed with humour, and the power of delighting whatever company they deign to bleſs with their preſence, are apt to give their tongues a licence to wander without the reins of judgment, to affect uncommon expreſſions, attitudes, grimaces, and modes of addreſs and behaviour; and to imagine, that oddity is humour, eccentricity wit, downright nonſenſe prodigiouſly droll, and rudeneſs infinitely entertaining. If the company are as fooliſh as the pretended wit; or, indeed, if they are very polite and good-natured, they ſeldom refuſe the eaſy tribute of a laugh, either real or affected; and the joker, animated by his fancied encouragement, proceeds in his extravagant ſallies, till his aſſumed folly approaches very nearly to real idiotiſm. In the mean time, as he draws the attention of the company on himſelf, and engroſſes all the time and talk, he not only lowers himſelf, but prevents others from riſing; relaxes the tone of his own mind, and, of all around, to a ſtate of imbecility, and at once prevents the opportunity and the power of uttering a ſingle idea worth remembrance. Noiſe and laughter are but meagre food for the mind; and however pleaſed people may appear, they commonly retire from the company in which theſe have formed the only entertainment, with an unſatisfied and uneaſy vacuity, with diſguſt and diſagreeable reflection.

It very often happens that theſe facetious gentlemen rely upon more expeditious methods of becoming *prodigiouſly entertaining* than any thing which requires

utterance. They enter a room, and sit down gravely, with their wigs on one side, or with the back part of it over their forehead. They take great delight in the practical joke; and if they can pick your pocket of your handkerchief, smut your face, draw your chair from under you, or make you a fool, as they call it, they consider themselves as other Yoricks, and as fellows of infinite humour, endowed with peculiar talents for setting the table on a roar. It might, indeed, be said with truth, that they literally make fools of themselves, and appear ambitious of supplying that order which was once very common, but is now either a little out of fashion, or introduced in disguise; I mean the order of professed and hireling fools for the amusement of the nobility. It has indeed been jocularly said, that many of the nobility in the present age, execute the office in their own persons to save expence.

Now, though there were nothing criminal in buffoonery, yet as it tends, when too long continued, to weaken the faculties of the mind, to exclude all attention to any thing serious, to divest conversation of its power of affording improvement as well as pleasure, it is certainly to be wished that it were, in some measure, restrained. I say restrained only; for I do not know any just reason why any method of innocently amusing the mind, during a short interval of inaction, should be utterly forbidden. Man is an animal that delights in variety; mirth and mimickry, jest and jollity, *quips and cranks and wanton wiles, and Laughter holding both his sides*, are certainly no less allowable as the means of relaxation, than cards, backgammon, billiards, and the bottle. He is wise who requires moderation in all these indulgences; but he who inveighs against any of them in the gross, and without exception, has taken a false estimate of human nature, and is not to be considered as a moralist, but as a declaimer. If any one rule will admit of universal application, it is that which directs us to observe the golden mean.

I could never admire the wisdom of certain self-elected legislators of graceful behaviour, who seem to forbid us to laugh, with much greater strictness than they would have prohibited the violation of the decalogue.

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To be remarkable for laughing, is not only ungraceful, but a ſign of folly. But God has diſtinguiſhed man by the power of riſibility, and there is no reaſon why he ſhould not exerciſe it on proper occaſions; and, perhaps, there would be no occaſion more proper, than when a diſciplined fop ſhews by his behaviour, that he prefers the varniſh of external grace to honour and to honeſty.

Wit, it has been ſaid, does not naturally excite laughter. But this obſervation, though true in part, is not univerſally true; for wit, united with humour, poſſeſſes ſuch a command of the riſible muſcles, that he muſt be a ſtoic, or a very ill-natured man, who is able to reſiſt the impulſe. I ſhould, indeed, have no favourable opinion of that man's heart or diſpoſition, who could be preſent at a truly comic ſcene without laying aſide his ſeverity, and ſhaking his ſides with as much glee as the ingenious child of nature. And if it is a weakneſs not to be able to refrain from laughter at a ludicrous object, it is a weakneſs [illegible] others the moſt pardonable; and it is ſurely better to be weak than malignant. But, in truth, the weakneſs conſiſts only in laughing immoderately or frequently without an adequate object.

In every convivial meeting of elegant and poliſhed company, the Muſes and the Graces ſhould be of the party. The firſt honours and attention ſhould be paid to them; but let not Comus and Jocus be forbidden to follow in their train, and under their command. The entertainment will be thus heightened and varied, and good ſenſe and decorum derive new luſtre from good-humour. We would, indeed, reſtrain that exceſſive and rude mirth which originates in levity and folly, and becomes what is called buffoonery; but far be it from us to baniſh that ſprightlineſs which naturally reſults from the gaiety of innocence. Joy, while we are bleſſed with health and eaſe, and what the ſtoics call EUROIA, or the well flowing of the ſtream of life, is gratitude and obedience.

No. CXXVI. ON THE STYLE OF XENOPHON AND PLATO.

WRITERS, who have diſplayed any of that uniform peculiarity in their ſtyle which renders it eaſily imitable, however popular they may become at their firſt appearance by gratifying the paſſion for novelty, are by no means the moſt perfect writers; but are to be claſſed with thoſe artiſts of the pencil, whom the painters diſtinguiſh by the appellation of Manneriſts. Simplicity of diction, as it is one of the moſt engaging beauties, is alſo one of the moſt difficult to imitate. It exhibits no prominency of feature, but diſplays one whole, properly embelliſhed with a thouſand little graces, no one of which obtrudes itſelf in ſuch a manner as to deſtroy the appearance of a perfect ſymmetry. In this ſpecies of excellence Xenophon is confeſſedly a model. He has been called the Attic Muſe and the Attic Bee. It has been ſaid, that the Muſes would expreſs themſelves in his language, that his ſtyle is ſweeter than honey, that the Graces themſelves appear to have aſſiſted in its formation; but though all this power is juſtly due, yet it would be difficult to point out any one beauty which recurs ſo often in the ſame form, as to characteriſe his compoſition.

But the numerous writers who have imitated the Rambler, or the Adventurer, are diſcovered in their affectation, before the reader has peruſed a ſingle page. The very peculiar manner of thoſe excellent performances, has been eaſily imitated by inferior writers, and more eaſily caricatured. Addiſon is ſimple and natural, and, conſequently, has not often been mimicked with equal ſucceſs. Indeed, the nearer we approach to the manner of Addiſon, the more agreeable is our ſtyle; but, I believe, none ever admired the ſtyle of the Rambler, but in the hands of its original author. The ſatyrical writer of Lexiphanes eaſily rendered it ridiculous;

ridiculous; and though in ſome of Aikin's proſaic pieces there is a very ſerious and good imitation of it, yet we are rather diſpoſed to ſmile than admire. Affectation always borders on burleſque; but a manner, which derives its graces from nature, cannot be rendered ridiculous. The ſtyle of Xenophon, like the philoſopher whom he records, is proof againſt the ſportive and malignant buffoonery of an Ariſtophanes.

It is however certain, that every beauty cannot be combined under one form. If the ſtyle of Xenophon diſplays grace, eaſe, and ſweetneſs; it is deficient in magnificence, in weight, in authority, and in dignity. But it ſhould be remembered, that the Venus of Medici is not to be cenſured, becauſe it wants the nerves and muſcles of the Farneſian Hercules. It appears to me, however, that though ſome of the moſt popular writers of England yield to Xenophon in the ſofter graces, they greatly excel him in maſculine beauty. The authors of the Rambler, of the Adventurer, and of ſome of their imitators, will be found to poſſeſs a ſuperiority in this reſpect, on a fair compariſon. Indeed, if there were more ſingularities and deviations from ſimplicity than are to be found in thoſe volumes, their excellent ſenſe and fine morality ought to exalt their authors to a degree of honour, far ſuperior to any which can be derived from a ſkill in compoſition.

According to the opinions of the beſt judges, antient and modern, the greateſt maſter of the beauties of ſtyle whom the world ever ſaw, was the divine Plato. The antients heſitated not to aſſert, in the zeal of their admiration, that if Jupiter were to ſpeak in the language of Greece, he would infallibly expreſs himſelf in the diction of Plato. He poſſeſſed the art of combining ſeverity with grace, and ſweetneſs with grandeur; and to him we owe a ſimilar combination, in the great orator and philoſopher of Rome, who formed his ſtyle on the model of Plato; and has given us a reſemblance ſcarcely leſs exact than that of the buſt to its mould, or of the waxen ſeal to the ſculptured gem.

The introductions to the dialogues of Cicero are always peculiarly beautiful; ſo alſo are thoſe of Plato.

It

It is agreeable to call to mind the ſweet ſpot which Plato repreſents as the ſcene where the dialogues paſſed, in language no leſs delightful than the ſcene itſelf.

The river Iliſſus glided over the pebbles in a clear ſtream, but ſo ſhallow that you might have walked through it without any great inconvenience. At a ſmall diſtance roſe a tall plane tree, ſpreading its broad foliage to a conſiderable diſtance, and flouriſhing in all the mature luxuriance of ſummer beauty. At the root of the tree iſſued a ſpring, dedicated to Achelous and the Nymphs, and remarkable for its cool and limpid water. The ſofteſt herbage grew round its little banks, the verdure of which was rendered perpetual by the refreſhing moiſture of the ſpring, as it flowed down a gentle declivity. A ſweet and cooling breeze generally breathed along the ſhade, and great numbers of Cicadæ, taking ſhelter from the ſun, reſorted to the coverts, and made an agreeable kind of natural muſic with their little notes, which ſeldom ceaſed. Plato adds ſeveral other agreeable heightenings of the ſcene, in which moral and philoſophical beauty was to emulate the beauties of nature. The language of Plato adds charms to the whole, as variegated colours illuminate and embelliſh the plain ſketches of the chalk or pencilled outline.

It is no wonder that philoſophy, recommended by ſuch graces as theſe, was found to render her votaries enamoured. Virtue and public ſpirit can ſcarcely ever want their admirers and followers, when they are decorated in a manner which ſets off their own lovelineſs to the greateſt advantage. It is to be lamented, for the ſake of virtue, that Lord Shafteſbury was a ſceptic. His ſtyle was a fine imitation of Plato, and diſplays ſuch beauties, as might conceal the uglineſs of a deformed ſyſtem. Mr. Harris has alſo exhibited the Platonic graces in high perfection; and I cannot help conſidering it as a mark of defective taſte that he is not more popular. His ſtyle appears to be one of the moſt elegant, claſſical, and judiciouſly ornamented among all the Engliſh writers of the preſent century. They who have raiſed their taſte ſo as to perceive his beauties, will conſider the ſtyle of many writers, whom they once admired, as comparatively barbarous. He who never taſted

tasted the pine-apple, the peach, and the nectarine, may probably suppose that he enjoys the most exquisite flavour of the fruit garden while he is feasting on a pippin; as he, who never partook of the pippin, may devour a crab, and admire it as a delicacy.

A critic of antiquity, Dionysius the Halicarnassian, has discovered many and great faults in the style of Plato. He seems to think the epithets too poetical, the metaphors too bold, the matter too allegorical. Pompey the Great disputed the point with him; and there is a curious letter extant on the subject, from the critic to the statesman. It is, indeed, obvious to remark, that, though Plato would not admit Homer into his republic, he has admitted many of his beauties into his style; and has often written with an enthusiastic warmth, which they, who have not partaken of the efflatus to which he somewhere pretended, cannot entirely approve. A cold critic, like Dionysius, would naturally be disgusted with it; but we cannot listen to his censures of a noble genius, who snatched graces beyond the reach of art; whom Pompey approved, and whom Tully almost idolized. When specimens of perfect composition were to be pointed out, the choice has fallen on the Georgics of Virgil and the Menexenus of Plato.

Both Xenophon and Plato display, what is more valuable than all verbal elegance, a fine system of morality, which long shone forth in the world as a light unequalled, till the sun of revelation arose. If Xenophon's memoirs were divested of a few superfluities and a few absurdities, I should not fear to assert, that they approach very nearly to the Gospel, in the exhibition of instructive lessons, and a sublime, yet encouraging example, of all human excellence; for, with respect to the calumnies advanced against Socrates, they undoubtedly originated from the father of lies. And those writers are to be esteemed the enemies to human virtue and happiness, who employ their ingenuity in detracting from illustrious and established reputation.

No. CXXVII. ON THE ADVANTAGES DERIVABLE FROM NATIONAL ADVERSITY.

IT is very certain that national proſperity, as it is comprehended in the idea of numerous fleets and armies, of extenſive empire, large revenues, advantageous commerce, and a profuſion of money in ſpecie, is a kind of good by no means neceſſarily connected with moral good, or with the ſubſtantial happineſs of individuals. It makes a ſplendid figure in imagination's eye; but to reaſon, it appears in a very queſtionable ſhape, and experience is able to evince, that it has always diffuſed profligacy and miſery through the walks of private life; and, by introducing luxury, licentiouſneſs, indolence, and corruption, has at once deſtroyed all that can render human nature dignified and happy, and precipitated the decline and the downfall of empires themſelves, while triumphing in fancied glory.

It has been obſerved that the Bodies Politic and Natural bear to each other a remarkable analogy. A human form pampered, bloated, and plethoric, will often have the appearance of ſtrength, as well as magnitude; though no ſtate of it can be leſs adapted to facilitate the animal movements, or in greater danger of a haſty diſſolution. The body politic alſo loſes in muſcular force, as much as it acquires of unwieldy ſize, till, by the gradual decreaſe of vigour, and augmentation of weight, it totters on its baſeleſs ſupports, and, at laſt, lies level in the duſt with Babylon and antient Rome. Luxury, the inevitable conſequence of what is falſely called national proſperity, becomes the grave of empires, and of all that could adorn them; or render their longer duration a rational object of deſire.

There is, undoubtedly, a certain degree of magnitude, at which, when a State is arrived, it muſt, of neceſſity, undergo the alternative; of being purged of its peccant humours, or falling into a nerveleſs languor and

and conſequent decline. Perhaps our own country has already arrived at that degree, and is now, under the operation of Divine Providence, ſuffering the amputation of its morbid excreſcences for the ſalvation of its health and exiſtence. It may loſe ſome of its revenues; but it will ſave and meliorate its morals and its liberty. Miniſters may be ſhaken from their ſeats, penſioners and placemen may be reduced to deſpair, funds may be annihilated, and eſtates brought down to their natural value; but freedom, but virtue, but induſtry, but the Britiſh conſtitution, but human nature, ſhall ſurvive the wreck, and emerge like ſilver and gold when tried by the fire, with new value and additional luſtre. After a ſtate of political adverſity, ſomething may take place in the ſociety, ſimilar to the expected renovation of all things, after the general conflagration of the univerſe.

Diſtreſs and difficulty are known to operate in private life, as the ſpurs of diligence. Powers, which would for ever have lain dormant in the halcyon days of eaſe and plenty, have been called forth by adverſity, and have advanced their poſſeſſor to the moſt enviable heights of virtue, happineſs, and glory. Man is naturally indolent, and, when undiſturbed, will baſk and ſleep in the ſunſhine till the ſleep of death; but, when roufed by the blaſt and the thunder, he riſes, ſtrains every ſinew, and marches on to enterpriſe. Succeſs will almoſt infallibly attend great exertions, uniformly and reſolutely continued; ſo that what begun in miſery ends in triumph, as the ſun which roſe in a miſt deſcends with ſerenity, and paints the whole horizon with gold and purple.

Public induſtry may be excited in the ſame manner, and in the ſame degree, by public misfortunes. The nation is impoveriſhed, or, in other words, its ſuperfluities are retrenched. It is an event devoutly to be wiſhed. Luxury, with ten thouſand evils in her train, is obliged to withdraw, and the humble virtues, whom ſhe had driven, by her inſolence, into exile, cheerfully advance from their concealment. Induſtry and frugality take the lead; but to what a degree of vigour muſt every muſcle of the body politic be braced, when every member

member is, in some measure, actuated by industry and frugality. No man ever yet exerted himself to the utmost of his strength; nor is it on record, that any state was ever yet so exhausted, but that, while it enjoyed liberty, it might draw new resources from its own vitals. Though the tree is lopped, yet, so long as the root remains unhurt, it will throw out a greater luxuriancy of branches, produce fruit of better flavour, and derive fresh vigour from the axe. If one has accidentally disturbed an ant-hill, or broken the fabric of the hive, though the little animals appeared before to have exerted their utmost efforts, yet it is amazing, with what additional diligence they apply themselves to repair the depredation. Not a moment is allowed for despondency. The earth and the air glow with motion, and the misfortune seems immediately to add to their spirits, and ultimately both to their store and security.

The beautiful description which Virgil has given us of the busy scene in which the Tyrians are engaged in building Carthage, represents, in a most lively manner, the alacrity with which human creatures are found to exert themselves, when instigated by the stimulus of necessity. An emulation of labour seizes every bosom. No murmuring, no complainings in the street, but every one feels himself happy, in proportion as he renders himself useful. Mens abilities rise with the occasion; and political evil, like other evil, under the conduct of a merciful deity, has produced extensive good, by calling forth some of the noblest exertions, and most perfect characters which have adorned the records of human nature.

There is one beneficial effect of national adversity, of greater importance than any which I have enumerated. It subdues the haughty soul elevated with riches, and inebriated with excess, and turns the attention to the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the only Ruler of princes, who, from His throne, beholds all nations, and bids the sceptre to depart from the wicked to the righteous. It teaches us to rely less upon our German auxiliaries, our musquets, our mortars, our cannon, our copper-bottomed men of war, our generals, and our admirals, than on the Lord of Hosts.

When

When he fights for us we shall conquer. Without him, we shall in vain put our trust in a Burgoyne, a Keppel, or a Cornwallis; but "the ball of empire shall "continue to roll on westward as it has ever yet done, "till it stops in America, a world unknown to the an- "tients, and which may save the tears of some future "Alexander."

If Providence shall have decreed the downfall of British supremacy, happy should I be to have suggested one idea which may stimulate the exertions of my countrymen, once more to raise the noble column on the basis of liberty and virtue; or which may console them on its ruins, and teach them, while they sit by the waters of bitterness, and hang their harps on the willow, to think of Him who can make rivers of comfort to flow in the dreary desert.

No. CXXVIII. ON SOME OF THE FALSE PRETENSIONS AND IMPOSITIONS OF THE ARTFUL AND AVARICIOUS.

NOTWITHSTANDING the pretensions of religion, philosophy, and education, the greater part of mankind appears to be restrained in their actual conduct by few efficient principles, but those which are dictated by a regard to interest. To the love of gain, and the weakness or want of principles, it must be imputed, that every occupation and department of life abounds with imposture. A masque is easily put on. Appearances are, indeed, far more easily assumed than realities; and they are often more successful and more plausible; for the edifice of him, who employs all his time and attention in gilding, painting, and carving the front, will much sooner attract the notice and applause of the passenger, than that of him who has been solicitous only about the strength of the beam, and the massy firmness of the foundation.

So powerful are the instigations of avarice, and so easy is it to deceive the young, the simple, the innocent, and

and unſuſpecting, that the intercourſe among mankind would have been one uniform commerce of deceit, if it had not fortunately happened, that the ſame want of principle and ſuperfluity of ſelfiſhneſs, which led the deceivers to impoſe upon mankind, induced them alſo to betray the arts of each other. Rival cheats, in the fury of jealous competition, have diſcovered the ſecrets of the juggling art, and opened the eyes of the deluded obſervers.

But, as there is always a riſing generation unacquainted with the ſnares of the deceitful, nets and traps are ſtill laid wherever there is a probability of prey. It becomes thoſe then, who have ſeen many of the arts of life, to let others profit by their experience, and prevent the generous game from falling into the hands of the mercenary poacher.

It may be preſcribed as a rule which will not often fail in the application, that where extraordinary pretenſions are made, either in the manual arts, the trades, or the profeſſions, there is juſt ground for caution and ſuſpicion. Solid merit, and real excellence of every kind, uſually confide in their own power of recommending themſelves, while ignorance, and ſuperficial ſkill, naturally endeavour to enſnare by cunning, what they cannot earn by deſert. There is a delicacy and ſpirit attendant on real worth and ingenuity, which had rather be without ſucceſs, than attain it by artifice and arrogant pretenſion.

The prudent and experienced are generally on their guard againſt thoſe numerous adventurers, who rely for ſucceſs on advertiſements in the public papers. If there is any difference between the mercer, haberdaſher, or wine-merchant, who advertiſes his goods, and him who does not, it is, that the advertiſer ſells, at a dearer price, a worſe commodity. His ſhop is a kind of *trap*, the bait is pretended cheapneſs; and many a young bird is caught with the chaff of a bargain. A wiſe man will take care not to lay out his money when things are to be ſold at prime coſt, and under prime coſt, and twenty *per cent.* cheaper than the reſt of the trade. Beware of thoſe generous ſpirits, who ſell their property, or their induſtry, *pro publico bono*; beware, as you value your

your health and your life, of thoſe who will cure you of all diſeaſes with a five ſhilling pill box; beware of being poiſoned by the vintner, who promiſes you neat as imported; which words being interpreted, ſignify a liquor in which not a drop of grape juice, or foreign ſpirits, is to be found. Beware of your purſe and your credulity, when you are offered to be taught more of the languages and ſciences by a new method, in ſix months, ſix weeks, or ſix hours, than thoſe who preſide over ſchools can teach in ſix or ſixteen years. Beware of a thouſand artful tricks which are diſplayed in the newſpapers, and which the deceitful heart of man contrives, as the ſpider weaves his web, to catch thoſe who are unſuſpecting, becauſe they are innocent. The true meaning of all pompous pretences, and inviting advertiſements is, that their authors being diſtreſſed, and, probably, deſtitute both of character, friends, and merit, find an eaſy mode of ſupplying the defect, by digging pitfalls for the unwary, with whom the world muſt always abound, at the expence of a few ſhillings for every ſnare. Such, indeed, is the credulity of mankind, that many a quack and pretender has poſſeſſed an eſtate in the corner of a newſpaper, equal to large freeholds of dirty acres.

There are few departments in which more inſtances of deception occur, than in the lower walks of literature. It happens, that they who are to be mechanically inſtrumental in diſſominating ſcience and philoſophy, and all the productions of human wit, conſtitute a very numerous body, conſiſting of many members in extreme indigence, from the author, by trade, down to the bookbinder and the devil. Employment muſt be provided for them all, or both they and their families muſt want bread. The preſs muſt, therefore, be conſtantly in motion; but what is to ſupply it? A very few preſſes would be ſufficient to prepare for the public view all productions really new and neceſſary. Compilations are formed under a thouſand ſhapes and diſguiſes; and men of ſtraw, adorned with Doctors Degrees, and the dignity of Fellows of the Royal Society, are created by the fiat of the adventurous publiſher, and ſtand forth as the renowned authors, in all the dignity of a title page.

From

From these powerful men in buckram issue grand and Imperial Bibles, new Systems of Geography, Histories of England, and Collections of Voyages, with a permission to read the first number, and return it if not approved, and a promissory note, generously engaging that all numbers, exceeding a certain amount, shall be given *gratis*. But if any deceit can be excused, perhaps it is such an one as this, which feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, and communicates much entertaining and useful knowledge among the poor. I wish as good an apology could be made for those who are impelled, by avarice rather than want, to deceive the public; to bring out, with all the pomp of announcing advertisements, new editions of books, in which nothing has been reprinted but the title, to injure the character and sale of a work whenever the ingenious author prints it on his own account; and to practise all those mean and base arts which are comprehended in the significant, but cant, appellations of puffery and tricks in trade. Many a mean mind will perhaps take umbrage at these remarks; but I have long ago resolved to bear with patience, in the cause of truth, all the malice of her enemies.

There are those who call such arts as these, innocent frauds; but it is well remarked by a very sound moralist, that no frauds are innocent; because they destroy the confidence of society, on which our happiness and convenience in every part of our intercourse with each other, greatly depend. I will venture to add, that he who will cheat without remorse in one thing, will cheat in another whenever he can do it with equal secrecy and impunity. Though tricks in trade, or the deceitful mysteries of a profession, may enable a man to raise a capital house of business, to be in a great way, or to become a good man, as the phrases are in the city, yet they can never be compatible with common honesty, nor render him more truly respectable, than the humbler adventurer who actually invades your fob, or rifles your pocket.

No.

No. CXXIX. ON THE PREVAILING TASTE IN POETRY.

SWEET poesy! thou loveliest object of intellectual pursuit.——But I am running into a rhapsody, when I intended only a dissertation. It is, indeed, difficult not to be transported beyond the limits of cool criticism, in contemplating the beauties which the magic hand of the poet raises around, with all the creative power of a real enchantment. From the cares of gain, the toils of ambition, the noise, the hurry, the vexation of a disordered world, we rise on the wings of poesy to ethereal regions, where all is sublime and tranquil; or are wafted to visionary scenes, in which are displayed all the delicious sweets of a paradise and an elysium. Away, ye sordid objects; ye pollutions and incumbrances of the pure spirit! Man is not tied down to you. Providence, in compassion to wretched mortals, has given them a power of forsaking this low orb, and soaring awhile, all mind, all spirit, all extasy, in the car of the swan, on the wings of the eagle.

Reason alone, with all her pretensions, is seldom sufficient to soothe our cares, and compose our passions; but melody and fancy united with her, are capable of pouring balm into the wounded heart. In all nations, and in all ranks of the people, some species of poetry has been cultivated; and a taste for it was undoubtedly implanted in our nature, that the sore evils of reality might often be alleviated by the sweets of fiction. When Pandora's box was opened on mankind, and misery diffused on every side, fancy, as well hope, kindly lingered for our consolation.

While we are tracing the love of song from the voured isles of the Southern Ocean, to the regions of Iceland, we are naturally tempted to dwell, with particular attention, on the poetical taste of our own country, and our own times.

I think

ſevere criticiſms of the late biographical preface to the works of Gray, will, perhaps, contribute to explode a moſt delightful ſtyle of pure poetry; of poetry, converſant ſolely in the regions of fancy, and clothed in a luminous and muſical diction appropriated to itſelf, and moſt remote from all that is proſaic. Very high commendations are due to Mr. Anſtey, to the author of a poetical epiſtle to Sir William Chambers, to Mr. Hayley, and to ſeveral others who are well known to fame for their ſucceſsful labours in the ſchool of Pope; but, at leaſt, an equal ſhare of praiſe ought to be paid to the ſcholars of Milton and Spenſer;—ſuch as Mr. Maſon, and the two poetical brothers. With reſpect to Gray, he has received his tribute of applauſe from a diſcerning public, and has certainly deſerved it. The heart and the imagination have given it him; and they who can ſee no beauty in his verſe, may probably ſucceed in writing a lampoon; but would probably fall far ſhort of the poet whom they cenſure, in lyric and elegiac poetry.

None can entertain a higher veneration for our late Prefatory Biographer of the poets than myſelf, and I was therefore greatly concerned to ſee him expoſed to cenſure by an uncandid, not to ſay injudicious, piece of criticiſm on the poems of Gray. He indeed allows the merit of the elegy, but examines and cenſures the odes with every appearance of wanton malignity. Who but muſt lament that the ſolid critic and moraliſt ſhould have been ſo much under the influence of envy and jealouſy, as to treat the fame of his cotemporary, the illuſtrious Gray, with ſingular harſhneſs, in a work which contains very candid accounts of a Sprat and a Yalden, a Duke and a Broome, and of others, with whom, if Gray is compared, he will appear, as Shakeſpeare ſays, like Hyperion to a Satyr.

The late collection of poets has reſtored to temporary life many a ſickly and dying poet, who was haſtening to his proper place, the tomb of oblivion. Why was any more paper waſted on Dorſet, Halifax, Stepney, Walſh, and Blackmore? How can a work pretend to the comprehenſive title of the Body of Engliſh Poetry, in which the works of Spenſer and Shakeſpeare are omitted to make

make room for such writers as King or Ambrose Philips? The writer of the prefaces is, indeed, sufficiently willing to throw the blame from himself on the compilers, whom he was not permitted, or did not endeavour to controul. A selection, formed under the direction of true taste, would have answered the two great ends of the publication which it has now frustrated; it would have amply paid the booksellers, and reflected honour on English literature. Then should we have seen, in the place of Roscommon and Rochester, Pomfret and Fenton, the works of Goldsmith, of Glover, of Mason, of Aikin, of Carter, of Beattie, of the Wartons, of Anstey, and of many others, who would shine among the Hughes's, Pitts, and Savages, like the moon among the diminished constellations.

Upon the many and excellent living writers of poetry we may observe, that though the distressful times of war and political animosity are unfavourable to the gentle arts of verse; yet the active and polished genius of this nation seems capable of surmounting all obstacles in letters, as its manly spirit has ultimately borne all before it in the unhappy contests of war.

No. CXXX. ON THE PECULIAR DANGER OF FALLING INTO INDOLENCE IN A LITERARY AND RETIRED LIFE.

IT is certain that, as our ancestors were induced to found colleges by religious motives, so they chiefly intended them to answer the purposes of religion. Those pious benefactors to mankind did not mean to establish seminaries to prepare men for the world, but to teach them to despise it. But more enlightened periods than those in which these worthies lived, have discovered, that man best obeys his Maker when he takes an active part in the duties of society.

A long residence in a college is, perhaps, scarcely less unfavourable to devotion than to social activity. For devotion depends chiefly on lively affections, exercised and agitated by the vicissitudes of hope and fear in

in the various tranſactions and events of human intercourſe. He, who is almoſt placed beyond the reach of fortune in the ſhelter of a cloyſter, may, indeed, be led by the ſtatutes of the Inſtitution to attend his chapel, and doze over his cuſhion, but he will not feel, in any peculiar manner, the impulſe of devotional fervour. The man who is engaged in the buſy and honourable duties of active life, flies from the world to the altar for comfort and refreſhment; but the cloiſtered recluſe, pants, while he is kneeling in all the formalities of religion, for the pleaſures and employments of that world from which he is ſecluded. During ſeveral centuries, a great part of mankind was confined in monaſteries, ſolely for the advancement of religion and learning; yet never was the earth more benighted than in thoſe periods, by bigotry and ignorance. Nor will any one aſſert, that in ſubſequent times, and in modern univerſities, the improvements in knowledge and religion have been, in any degree, proportioned to the numbers of thoſe who have been ſeparated from the world to facilitate their cultivation. The truth ſeems to be, that when the common incentives to induſtry are removed, and all the natural wants ſupplied without the neceſſity of exertion, man degenerates, as the pure waters of the river ſtagnate and become putrid in the pool. At laſt, the boaſting poſſeſſor of reaſon contents *himſelf* with dreaming "the blank of life along," with no other proofs of exiſtence than the wants of the animal *nature*. Take away love, ambition, the changes and chances of this mortal life, and man will be contented to eat, drink, ſleep, and die.

Nor in colleges alone, though they may be conſidered as the temples of indolence, but in common life *alſo*, the human mind becomes torpid, as the neceſſity of exertion is diminiſhed. He who, confiding in the poſſeſſion of a fortune for his happineſs, avoids the avocations of a profeſſion, and what he calls the fatiguing parts of ſtudy, will ſoon loſe thoſe powers of mental activity which he has not reſolution to employ. If he does not gradually degenerate to a level with the irrational creation, he will not long be diſtant from the *vegetable*. When the habits are irretrievably confirmed, it might perhaps

perhaps be happy, if his nature would permit him to become at last impassive and quiescent; but as spontaneous fermentation takes place in masses of putrefaction, so, in the mind which has ceased to be exercised by its own efforts, emotions and habits will voluntarily arise both offensive and dangerous. Pride and envy, conceit and obstinacy, selfishness and sensuality, are among the ugly daughters of indolence.

It may appear paradoxical, but it is certainly an opinion authorized by experience, that an active life is the most friendly to contemplation. The fire of the mind, like culinary fire, has burned with a clear and constant flame, when opened and ventilated by perpetual motion, as it has been smothered and extinguished in smoke, when suffered to remain long without disturbance. The best, and many of the most voluminous writers, acted still more than they wrote. What could be more unlike the life of the cloister than the lives of Xenophon, Julius Cesar, Erasmus, and a thousand others, whose days were so engaged in negociation, in senates, in battles, in travelling, that it is not easy to conceive how they could find time even to write so great a quantity as they certainly composed? But such are the effects of assiduity, of an uninterrupted accumulation of efforts, that he who has been excited to restless activity by the spurs of honour, interest, and a generosity of nature, has frequently accomplished more by himself, than a thousand of his fellow-creatures employed in the same sphere, and furnished by nature, with equal abilities for improvement. A hackney writer of catch-penny compilations, the printer of a newspaper, the maker of a magazine, though engaged in a multiplicity of daily and various avocations, will perform, in a few months, a portion of literary labour, which shall infinitely exceed that of whole colleges, of those who slumber, or waste their activity on hounds and horses on the borders of the muddy Cam, and the slowly winding Charwell.

But it avails little to point out the disorders of literary indolence, without endeavouring to suggest a remedy. It appears then to me, that those whom Providence has blessed with leisure, and the opportunity of

of ſpending it in the purſuits of learning, and the liberal pleaſures of retirement, too often languiſh in their purſuits, from neglecting to render them the ſubjects of debate and converſation. It is the warmth of diſcuſſion in free and ſocial meetings which invigorates ſolitary ſtudy, and ſends the ſcholar back to his books with freſh alacrity. The hope of making a figure in a ſubſequent meeting, the fear of a ſhameful expoſure, and of appearing inferior to thoſe who are, in a natural and civil view, our equals, will ſtimulate all our powers, and engage all our attention, while we ſit in thoſe very libraries, where we once nodded and ſlumbered over the page even of a Homer. Meetings ſhould be eſtabliſhed in all literary ſocieties for the communication of remarks, and the rehearſal of compoſitions. But the ſtricteſt rules ſhould be preſcribed and obſerved for the preſervation of decorum; or elſe a majority of Maſters of Arts would vote away the books, the pens and the ink, and all the moral, philoſophical, and taſteful diſcourſes, in order to introduce pipes and tobacco, Joe Miller, and the punch bowl.

It is right alſo, that contemplative men, however far removed from the neceſſity of employment by the liberality of fortune, ſhould communicate with mankind, not only in pleaſures and amuſements, but in real duties and active virtues, either conjugal, paternal, profeſſional, official, or charitable. Something ſhould be engaged in, with ſuch obligations to performance, that an inclination to neglect ſhould be over-ruled by legal compulſion, or the fear of certain loſs and ſhame. The beſt method of avoiding the wretched ſtate of not knowing what to do, is, to involve one's ſelf in ſuch circumſtances as ſhall force one to do ſomething. The natural indolence of the human heart is found to eſcape every reſtraint but the iron arm of neceſſity. Such is our preſent condition, that we muſt be often chained down to our real happineſs and our beſt enjoyments.

With reſpect to the prevention of indolence in an academical life, it would certainly be a happy circumſtance, if none were allowed to reſide in an univerſity above ſeven years, who were not actually engaged in the compoſition

compoſition of a learned work, or in ſuperintending the education of youth as Tutors, Profeſſors, and Heads of Colleges. A Senior Fellow, without theſe employments, is one of the unhappieſt and leaſt uſeful members of the community.

No. CXXXI. ON THE MANNERS OF A METROPOLIS.

WHATEVER may be the political advantages of a very populous capital, and I believe they are of a very diſputable nature, the moral and phyſical evils of it are evidently numerous, and deſtructive of the human race. This obſervation is, indeed, true of all cities, in which too great a proportion of the people is aſſembled; but I ſhall confine my preſent obſervations to the capital of the Britiſh empire.

The junction of Weſtminſter with London, or of the Court with the City, is very juſtly ſuppoſed to have a pernicious influence on both; on thoſe who are engaged in the employments of commerce, and on thoſe who are invited from their paternal manſions by the court and the ſenate-houſe. The Courtier communicates to the Citizen a love of pleaſure, of diſſipation, of vanity; and the Citizen to the Courtier, an idolatrous veneration for opulence. The Courtier introduces the viciſſitudes of taſte and faſhion; the Citizen imitates them, and furniſhes, in profuſion, the means of their diſplay and gratification. Thus are luxury, and all its conſequent vices and miſeries, advanced to as high a degree as they can reach, by the union of ingenuity to invent modes of indulgence, with wealth to ſupply the materials.

Lovers of pleaſure in exceſs, are always lovers of themſelves in the ſame degree; and their love, with all the characteriſtical blindneſs of the paſſion, commonly injures its object. We ſhall therefore find ſelfiſhneſs prevailing in the metropolis, and producing all its natural effects of avarice, private gratifications, meanneſs, ſervility, and inhoſpitality. True patriotiſm and

public ſpirit, though the very want of them will often cauſe the greateſt pretenſions to them, will ſeldom be found in the more numerous claſſes who inhabit the capital. Where money and pleaſure are the ſole objects of ardent purſuit, public virtue, and indeed all virtue, will be expoſed to ſale, whenever a purchaſer can be found to pay the price. "Money, O ye Citizens!" ſays Horace, in a ſtyle of ſatyrical irony, "is firſt to be ſought, "and it is time enough to think of virtue, when you "have ſecured a fortune."

The inhabitants of a great city will often be inhoſpitable and unneighbourly. Their attention is fixed on advancing and gratifying themſelves, and they conſider their neighbours as rivals, or at leaſt as not worth cultivating, ſince they can always buy amuſement at the numerous places of public reſort and diverſion. But in the country, mutual good offices take place, from a mutual deſire and neceſſity of a friendly intercourſe. The Londoner hardly knows the name of his next door neighbour; and, in accidents and diſtreſs, would as ſoon think of ſending to Rome, as to him, for comfort and aſſiſtance. But in any emergency in a village, every hand is ready to afford relief. Hoſpitality to ſtrangers ſtill lingers in the diſtant country, but has long been baniſhed from that region of avarice and ſelfiſh profuſion, an overgrown city. Pay a viſit in Suſſex, in Devonſhire, in Cornwall, in Wales, in the North, and compare your reception among ſtrangers with that which you meet with in London and Weſtminſter. Luxury, avarice, and vice, have, indeed, a natural tendency to annihilate every generous principle, and to harden the heart againſt all connections which do not promiſe to terminate in ſenſual pleaſure, or in lucrative advantage.

The ſecrecy with which crimes can be committed in a crowd, is a powerful temptation. The Londoner may be involved in debauchery, and engaged in fraud, without being ſuſpected at home, or in his neighbourhood. In the country, the fear of ſhame, and a principle of pride, often operate, when virtue, honour, and conſcience, would ceaſe to reſtrain; for no one can there be guilty of an action remarkably diſhoneſt or immoral without detection. A gentleman who ſhould devote himſelf

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to the arts of the ſwindler, or the practices of the profligate debauchee, in a village or country town, would ſoon be compelled, by the hiſſes of infamy, to deſert the place, or to live there in ſolitude. But in a city, even men adorned with the robes of magiſtracy may proceed, with little notice, in the moſt ſcandalous conduct.

Weakneſs of body and weakneſs of underſtanding are often found to characterize the inhabitant of the capital. Luxury, want of air, want of ſleep, exceſs in food, and in ſenſual indulgence, have a natural tendency to debilitate. And if there were not continual ſupplies from the north, I know not whether the city would not exhibit the human race in a moſt lamentable condition of imbecility, folly, diſtortion, and deformity. Compare the limbs of the volunteer ſoldiers in the metropolis with thoſe of the ruſtic militia, or regulars; compare the conduct and underſtanding of him who was born within the ſound of Bow-bell, with thoſe of the hardy native of Yorkſhire or Scotland.

The extremes of irreligion and enthuſiaſm mark the manners of the capital. Theſe, indeed, are the natural conſequences of ſome among the many bad diſpoſitions already enumerated. Sunday is conſidered by the thrifty trader as a holiday, on which he may indulge without imprudence. It is therefore diſtinguiſhed by many from the reſt of the week, ſolely by exceſs, and by vicious indulgences. The pariſh churches are neglected; nor is there a great concourſe to any place of worſhip, except where ſome enthuſiaſt or hypocrite has opened a receptacle for thoſe who labour under the ſymptoms of idiotiſm or inſanity. The ſymptoms are often confirmed under this injudicious courſe, till they arrive at a degree of madneſs, real and moſt melancholy.

I have pointed out ſome peculiar evils in the manners of the metropolis with two intentions. One is, to prevent, in ſome degree, the prevailing practice of emigrating from the country, from the ſeats of health and comparative innocence, to that ſink of ſin; and that grave of the human race, a city too crowded with people, and overrun with every abomination. The other is, to ſuggeſt a hint which may alleviate that part of the evil which admits a remedy. The love of money, of

diſtinction, of pleaſure, will probably fruſtrate the former purpoſe; but the latter, in a day of national diſtreſs, or under other circumſtances favourable to virtue, may poſſibly be accompliſhed.

To promote a reformation of manners, additional authority and efficiency muſt be given to the clergy and magiſtrates of London. Both of them are at this time looked upon by the vulgar, both high and low, with ſovereign contempt. The churches are left to curates, or poor incumbents, who, in a place where riches are idolized, hold a rank ſcarcely equal to the keeper of an ale-houſe or an oil-ſhop. The juſtices of Middleſex have long been the ſtanding objects of hatred and deriſion. Are the London clergy, who labour ſtrenuouſly in their vocation, and on whom ſo much of the ſtate of morals and chriſtianity depends, particularly countenanced by the miniſtry or the biſhops? It is parliamentary intereſt which procures mitres, and ſtalls, and livings; and though a city curate, or incumbent, ſhould convert millions from the error of their ways, he would ſtill be ſuffered to elbow his way along Cheapſide in his thread-bare coat and tattered gown; pointed out and laughed at by every apprentice. The common people will not diſcriminate. They will deſpiſe religion and morals when they ſee the teachers of them poor, mean, and neglected.

Is it not a diſgrace to the Defenders of the Faith, &c. that a London clergyman, who has promoted every charity, and probably reformed great numbers, during thirty or forty years, ſhall be ſuffered to live and die with nothing but a curacy and a beggarly lecture-ſhip? and that, in the mean time, he who is related to a Lord, or connected with Members of Parliament, though he never preached, and can hardly read, ſhall be loaded with dignities and pluralities? He who would reform the capital, I repeat, muſt render the clergy reſpectable in the eyes of the vulgar, and the magiſtrates formidable.

No. CXXXII. ON PHILELPHUS AND THEODORE GAZA, POLITE SCHOLARS OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

THOUGH the admirer of elegant letters will find his ſweeteſt, moſt ſolid and moſt conſtant pleaſures of the learned kind, in the writings of the Auguſtan age; yet he will often feel his curioſity powerfully excited and amply rewarded by thoſe among the revivers of learning who are diſtinguiſhed by the politeneſs of their literary accompliſhments. I was lately amuſing myſelf in this pleaſant walk of claſſical literature, when I accidentally met with the epiſtles of Philelphus. Though they are not without a few expreſſions which mark the barbariſm of his times, they poſſeſs a conſiderable ſhare of elegance, and partake much of the graces which ſhine ſo agreeably in the epiſtles of Pliny and Cicero.

Philelphus was born at Tollentino, in Italy, in the year 1398; a very early period for ſo uncommon an inſtance of proficiency. He died at Florence in 1480, after having filled a long life with the moſt laborious application. Let it be remembered, that printing was unknown at that time, and that not only the books which were compoſed, but which were alſo read, were often painfully tranſcribed by the ſtudent.

Philelphus was no inconſiderable poet, but was crowned with laurel, according to the faſhion of the times, by Alphonſo king of Naples. He wrote five different works in verſe, and, according to his own account in one of his letters, they conſiſted of ten books of ſatires, five books of miſcellaneous poems, the Sfortiad in eight books, ten books of epigrams, and three books of Greek poems. The number of verſes in the whole, as calculated by himſelf, amounted to thirty-three thouſand eight hundred. He has omitted, in this computation, his Nicholaus, a poem in two books, and in ſapphic verſe, which he compoſed in honour

honour of Pope Nicholas the Fifth, by whom he was greatly esteemed, and who had invited him, by a large present, to undertake the translation of Homer into Latin. He was scarcely less voluminous in prose, but less original, as his prosaic works consist chiefly of translations from Lysias, Aristotle, Xenophon, Hippocrates, and Plutarch. Though he has also written two books of Convivia, three entitled Commentationes Florentinæ, five on Moral Discipline, and the Life and Exploits of Francis Sfortia, in compliment to whom the Sfortiad, which has been mentioned already, was composed. There are also Orationes, of which Erasmus speaks rather unfavourably in his Ciceronianus.

But the only work of Philelphus which I have had an opportunity of inspecting, is the Epistles, of which this prolific author, in the course of a long life, has written no fewer than thirty-seven books. These abound with eloquence, and with such literary anecdotes and particulars, as cannot but afford amusement to the curious scholar. Though Morhoff rather slights them, yet Erasmus, a much better judge, acknowledges that they resemble Cicero.

I present the reader with an extract from one of them, selected for no other reason than that I happen to be reading it at the time I am writing, and that it characterizes the spirit of the author, and the great attachment which he bore to books. Cardinal Bessario, the patriarch of Constantinople, had applied to him, desiring him to sell his copy of Homer's Iliad; to which requeft Philelphus thus replies, "That copy "of Homer's Iliad which the very learned Theodore "Gaza has written out for me, I value so much, that "I would not part with it to any man, for all the vast "and wonderful treasures of Crœsus. I am really "surprized that you should think that I, who always "had the character of generosity, should be so much "changed as to be capable of avarice. I have learned "to give away many things, but to sell nothing, par-"ticularly books; than which I esteem nothing of "greater value. But this book of Homer is so dear "to my heart, and affords me so much pleasure, that "life itself can furnish nothing more delightful. There-

"fore

" fore pardon me in this one thing. If I can gratify " you in any thing else, you may command me, and " shall not be disappointed." My paper will not admit a number of citations, and I will therefore content myself with referring the lover of elegant latinity and literary anecdotes to the original collection.

It is a circumstance which adds to our surprize in contemplating this example of literary industry, that Philelphus was very much engaged in wars and in embassies; so true is it, that the greatest exertions of mind are compatible with the most active life. His writings are not free from faults, from that inaccuracy which proceeds from haste; but he is still a stupendous instance of diligence and excellence. Who but must lament, that after having done so much to enlighten a dark age, and enjoyed the friendship of princes and pontiffs, he should die in his eighty-second year so poor, that his bed, and the utensils of his kitchen, were obliged to be sold to pay the expences of his funeral! But few men of real genius love money; and of the liberality of Philelphus, the fragment which I have inserted is an ample testimony.

I hope it will not be tedious or disagreeable to the reader, if I mention a few circumstances relative to the friend and contemporary of Philelphus, Theodore Gaza, of whom he speaks in his epistle, as having transcribed for him a very fine copy of Homer's Iliad.

Theodore Gaza was born at Thessalonica, but received a part of his education in Italy. He was an elegant writer both in the Greek and the Latin language; but he displayed his abilities chiefly in translation; a most useful labour when the learned languages were imperfectly understood. He translated parts of Aristotle, Theophrastus, and Hippocrates, into Latin; and the treatise of Cicero on Old Age into Greek. He wrote also a treatise on Grammar in four books, which has been greatly celebrated. Greek learning, and indeed all antient learning, is greatly indebted to this distinguished reviver of it, Theodore Gaza.

But he also was unfortunate, and adds to the number of those whom Providence has exhibited to prove, that

that the rewards of virtuous and useful labour do not consist in riches, honours, or any thing else which the rulers of this world are able to bestow. Poor Gaza had dedicated his Translation and Commentaries on Aristotle's Book on Animals to Pope Sixtus the Fourth, in hopes of procuring from his patronage a little provision for his old age. The pope gave him only a purse with a few pieces in it, and accompanied his gift with a manner, which induced Gaza to conclude, that it was the last favour he should receive. Gaza received it in silence; and as he walked home, all melancholy and indignant, along the banks of the Tiber, he threw the purse into the stream; and soon after died of vexation and disappointment.

I have introduced these examples with a view to animate the student to industry; and at the same time, to teach him to seek his reward in his own heart, in the approbation of heaven, in the private satisfactions of study; and not to depend too much on princes, pontiffs, or popular favour.

No. CXXXIII. ON THE INEFFICACY OF THAT STYLE OF SPEAKING AND WRITING WHICH MAY BE CALLED THE FROTHY.

ON the decline of antient learning and Augustan taste, there arose a number of sophists and declaimers, who, in pursuit of an excellence in style superior to the natural graces of a better age, deviated into a most contemptible affectation. Quaint, awkward, and frivolous, as were their embellishments, they paid their principal attention to them, and totally neglected solidity and substance. This style of writing characterizes the decline of a genuine and manly eloquence. It is, indeed, like the hectic efflorescence on the countenance of an invalid far advanced in a consumption.

In several departments of modern literature, and even in our own country, a style of writing has appeared

peared which very much reſembles the ſophiſtical and declamatory. But I know not that it has been ſo conſpicuous in any of our publications, as in the popular addreſſes from the pulpit. Several of the favourite preachers in the capital, who ſeldom fail to fill every church in which they harangue, and to raiſe the largeſt contributions to charity-ſchools, have preſented the Public with their ſermons, in order to make the experiment, whether that oratory which delights the lower orders in the pulpit, would be equally well received in the cloſet. It was an unhappy experiment for the reputation of the orators; for there hardly ever appeared more remarkable ſpecimens of florid, frothy, and meretricious eloquence. Sounding braſs, and tinkling cymbals, are deſcriptions of it truly emblematical. If there is any ſweetneſs, it is a ſweetneſs which cloys, and makes you ſick; if there is any brightneſs, it is a brightneſs which dazzles and gives you pain; if there is any gold, it is not like the bullion, but like the leaf, expanded to a ſuperficies almoſt impalpable, under the operation of the goldbeater. Indeed, this ſpecies of ſtyle is very well deſcribed by the common epithet of the frothy; but, as a means of ſupplying aliment, or as a conſtant diet, what is a ſyllabub to a ſirloin?

Indeed, almoſt all the popular preachers in London, have found it eaſier to themſelves, and more agreeable to an illiterate and unthinking audience, to addreſs the ears, the fancy, and the paſſions, than the faculties of reaſon and judgment. If their diſcourſes were found to produce any better effect on their hearers, than that of furniſhing an amuſement for a leiſure half-hour, it would be wrong to cenſure them, merely becauſe they are offenſive to a delicate and refined taſte. But the truth is, that they excite only tranſient emotions, which, though they may laſt long enough to draw from the hearer a ſhilling for the churchwardens plate at the church door, will ſeldom go home with him, or produce an uniform influence on his perſonal and ſocial conduct. He goes to hear a fine preacher as he goes to a play, to be entertained when he has nothing elſe to do; he pays for his entertainment at the door, and gives himſelf

no farther concern on ſuch ſubjects, but to look out for a ſimilar one when his ſhop, or warehouſe, or counting-houſe are ſhut up, through the neceſſity of complying with the laws and cuſtoms of the country.

It may be ſaid, that though a taſte, formed by the pure models of Greece and Rome, may reprobate the frothy ſtyle, yet, ſince it is found to entertain the vulgar of a great capital, ſometimes uſefully, and always innocently, it ought not to be exploded. But perhaps we are not able to grant, that it does entertain them either uſefully or innocently. It certainly gives them wrong ideas of religion, and teaches them to neglect and deſpiſe the diſpaſſionate ſuggeſtions of reaſon. But it is one of the principal objections to this popular or frothy preaching, that it allures men from their own pariſh churches, and induces them to deſert the pulpit of a modeſt and regularly educated clergyman, for ſome noiſy and bold, ſome ignorant and hypocritical pretender. It leads them from the light of the ſun to thoſe meteors and vapours, whoſe dancing and uncertain gleam often conducts them into quagmires. There are few pariſhes in the metropolis which do not contain ſome thouſands of inhabitants; but you will often find in their reſpective churches not more than one hundred, and ſometimes ſcarcely half that number. Whither are they gone? Many, indeed, are carouſing in the delectable retreats of the rural Hoxton; but many are alſo gone to the new built chapels, or the crowded churches, where ſome ſilver-tongued orator is preaching himſelf, with all the pathos of a white handkerchief, the ſplendor of a diamond ring, the ſmartneſs of a well-dreſſed head, and the deceitful grimaces of an impoſtor. Religion, however, muſt loſe much of her venerable air, when, inſtead of the decent clothing of a chaſte and honourable matron, ſhe is repreſented in the taudry and flimſy garment, the painted cheeks, the glaſs ear-rings, the falſe briſſiants of the falſe courtezan.

I think I may confidently affirm, that the frothy ſtyle would not be tolerated at the bar or in the ſenate. It would be thought too trifling for the important ſubjects of property and politics. It would be an

object

object of ridicule. And shall that oratory which is hooted from the forum, not only take refuge, but lift up her head in triumph in the pulpit? It is not surprizing, that men of sense pass by wagging their heads when they find an orator haranguing in a church with all the affected language and sentiments of a fashionable auctioneer. The eloquence which has distinguished many of the most favourite preachers, and writers of pulpit harangues, is not that of St. Paul, of Demosthenes, of Cicero; but of those great masters of florid description, Messieurs Langford and Christie.

I believe it will appear consistent with reason, that a peculiar degree of gravity and solidity, far exceeding that of the senate or bar, is required to produce the due effect of pulpit oratory. Practical divinity is the graveſt species of moral philosophy, deriving additional dignity and force from the authenticity of revelation. The appearance of truth and simplicity is its most becoming ornament. To apply to it the little arts of rhetoric, and the petty graces of affectation, would be like painting, in tawdry and variegated colours, those Corinthian columns of St. Paul's Cathedral, which derive all their beauties from their simple and symmetrical grandeur. When we go to church we hope to hear salutary truth, and to receive improvement of mind and morals. When we wish to be only amused, we shall repair to the play and the puppet-show.

I will take the liberty to hint to young and fashionable divines, who are in general smitten with the false graces of style and delivery, that their congregation would be much more edified, if, instead of moral essays, in what they call *fine language*, they would preach sermons, properly so called, in the plain style of truth and scripture. Let them also take care, as they will answer it to Him in whose name they ascend the pulpit, not to preach themselves, but the Gospel; not to be so solicitous in the display of a white hand, as of a pure heart; of a diamond ring, as of a shining example.

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No. CXXXIV. ON THE GENIUS OF ERASMUS.

BATAVIA and Bœotia are by no means remarkable for the production of genius; but Bœotia may boaſt her Pindar, and Batavia her Eraſmus.

I mean not to conſider the theological opinions of Eraſmus, but his learning and his genius; and of theſe I may venture to affirm, that if Eraſmus had lived in an Auguſtan age, they would have advanced him to a rank among the beſt of the claſſics. But the theology and theologians of his times were at open war with the graces of taſte and elegance; and, conſidering the authority which they poſſeſſed, and the ſcarcity of any other writings than thoſe which proceeded from the cloiſter, it may be pronounced almoſt impoſſible to have lived and written in that age, without contracting a tinge of the prevailing barbariſm.

The ſtyle of Eraſmus is not therefore perfectly pure and claſſical; but it is his own, and it has a *native* charm which renders it agreeable. I would not adviſe a young man to view it as a model; nor, indeed, to be much converſant in the works of Eraſmus, or any modern writer of Latin, till his taſte be formed, and a judgment regulated, by Terence, Virgil, Cæſar, and Cicero.

But he, whoſe mind is mature, and whoſe comprehenſive powers are capable of graſping all pre-eminent authors, whether antient or modern, will receive pleaſure and improvement in a great degree from the *writings* of Eraſmus. They have uſually been ſtudied only by divines, and for theological information. But I warmly recommend them to the lover of philology, or of claſſical learning, as furniſhing a diſh for ſuch a palate, both plentiful and highly ſeaſoned. Eraſmus was born *to* cultivate the *Literæ Humaniores*, or the politer parts of learning; and I have often lamented, that he ſhould have been diverted from thoſe flowery paths into the rough roads of controverſial divinity.

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The colloquies, or dialogues of Eraſmus, are often uſed to initiate boys, at an early age, in the ſtudy of the Latin language. They are uncommonly lively, entertaining, and inſtructive; and as there is not much danger of corrupting the ſtyle of a very young boy, there are, perhaps, few books better adapted to the purpoſe. Indeed we muſt not do Eraſmus the injuſtice to aſſert, that he is devoid of elegance in ſtyle, for though, wherever he expreſſes theological ideas he is almoſt under the neceſſity of uſing words unknown to the writers of a better age; yet on other occaſions, he really abounds with phraſes of the pureſt and ſweeteſt Latinity. Neither are his dialogues to be conſidered as fit only for boys, ſince they abound in wit, humour, good ſenſe, and in alluſions which ſtrongly mark the fertility of the mind from which they originate. In a comparative eſtimate of genius, according to its kinds and degrees, I ſhould not heſitate to place Eraſmus in the ſame claſs with Lucian. There is, indeed, a ſeaſoning of ſalt in all his writings, in which the neceſſity of being grave did not forbid him to be facetious. The *Ciceronianus* is an admirable ſpecimen of judgment and pleaſantry.

His Praiſe of Folly is a moſt humorous ſatire, and reflects no leſs honour on the inventive powers, than on the good ſenſe of its author; as it was written, if I miſtake not, in the ſpace of one week, for the amuſement of himſelf and Sir Thomas More, at whoſe houſe he was upon a viſit. It made its author many enemies; but his genius roſe like the arm of a giant againſt a hoſt of pygmies, and defeated them all after a ſhort conflict. His forgiveneſs of the vain and angry Dorpius who firſt attacked him, evinces his magnanimity and goodneſs of heart. Spite and envy may ſecretly undermine, but can never make an open and ſucceſsful attack on the fortreſs of true genius.

But the epiſtles of Eraſmus will, perhaps, be found to furniſh the ſtudent in philology with more amuſement than any other of his works. They are, indeed, a valuable treaſure of curious information. Their clear and lively language, their poignant wit, and good-natured humour, render it difficult to lay them aſide when

when once we are engaged in the ſerious peruſal of them. They are very numerous, but they are by no means all which Eraſmus wrote. He complains, indeed, of being obliged to write ſo many, that there was not a poſſibility of taking copies of them all. A great ſhare of knowledge of the world, and of human nature, as well as of letters and literary characters, may be collected from them by the attentive reader.

But, indeed, to whatever part of his voluminous works we turn our attention, we can ſcarcely avoid the ſentiments of pleaſure and ſurprize. He has written more than many ſtudents were ever able to read. He has written ſo excellently, that all the learned, except a few envious contemporaries, from his own times to ours, have uniformly conſidered him as a prodigy. And let it never be forgotten, that, under Providence, he owed his education and ſubſequent improvements entirely to himſelf. He was uſed ill and neglected in his youth. He abounded neither in books nor in inſtructors; but he poſſeſſed a genius and a love of letters, before which all obſtacles uſually give way, like the Alps to an Hannibal.

It adds greatly to our wonder, in contemplating his large and crowded tomes, when we recollect that he ſpent his life in a moſt unſettled ſtate, and in conſtantly travelling from city to city, and from kingdom to kingdom. But his mind was employed in ſtudy wherever he went, and he compoſed many parts of his works as he rode on his horſe. He was alſo attacked by many enemies; and though he was placable, yet as he was alſo iraſcible, much of that time and attention, which would otherwiſe have been devoted to calm contemplation, was neceſſarily loſt in controverſy.

He was certainly the greateſt man of his time. Popes, kings, archbiſhops, biſhops, and cardinals, hide their diminiſhed heads in his preſence. One is, indeed, almoſt tempted to laugh when one ſurveys a groupe of ſtupid perſonages, with crowns and mitres, riches and titles, ſitting on their thrones and in their cathedral, yet bowing with an homage at once abject and involuntary, to the perſonal merit of the poor Eraſmus. He, indeed, was permitted, by Providence, to paſs through his pilgrim-

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age in this world without eccleſiaſtical riches or dignity; he was deſigned as an inſtance to prove, that great merit is its own reward, and that temporal diſtinctions are allowed, like trifles beneath the notice of heaven, to fall indiſcriminately on the deſerving and the undeſerving, the learned and the ignorant. Eraſmus had no mitre; but he had the internal ſatisfactions of genius; he had glory, he had liberty.

Though I am ſenſible he wants no addition to his fame, and could not receive any from my applauſe, yet I have ventured to pay him this humble tribute, as the oblation of gratitude for the great and repeated pleaſure which his works once afforded me in the retirement of a college.

No. CXXXV. ON THE EDUCATION OF A PRINCE.

AN opinion has often prevailed, that the education of a prince ought to be totally different from that of other gentlemen, and that any remarkable ſhare of learning would diſgrace him. I ſhall not heſitate to affirm, that they were the enemies of princes who advanced ſuch an opinion; for nothing can contribute more effectually to the general abolition of the monarchical form of government, than to render the character and perſon of the monarch contemptible. In an age and country enlightened like our own, if a king were the only gentleman unadorned with a liberal education, his kingly office would ſerve only to augment the contempt, and rouſe the indignation of his people. Though he ſhould ſit on his throne, ſurrounded by his cringing courtiers, and his ſtanding army; and though he ſhould number among the provinces of his empire, the regions of the eaſt and the weſt; yet, in the eyes of every ſenſible and independent ſpectator, his perſonal littleneſs would be rendered ſtill leſs, by a compariſon with his hereditary and official magnificence. The defects of the perſon would be attributed to the form of his government; and men of the greateſt moderation,

deration, if they were exempt from royal influence, would heave an involuntary ſigh for a republic or a revolution.

Every friend therefore to a reigning family, every lover of political tranquillity, and of regular ſubordination, will wiſh to augment the perſonal accompliſhments of that youth who is deſtined, at ſome future period, to wield a ſceptre. He will recollect, that the mind of a prince comes from the hand of nature, in a ſtate no leſs rude than the mind of a peaſant; and that, if it is not formed by early culture, it will ſoon become much ruder, more refractory, and more vicious, under the many unfavourable circumſtances of an exalted ſtation. It will be readily allowed, that a peculiar poliſh, enlargement, and liberality, is required in him who is to look with a comprehenſive eye through all the ranks of ſociety, and eſtimate the true intereſts of nations, and of mankind at large. Both the heart and the underſtanding of ſuch an one, ſhould be expanded to the utmoſt degree of poſſible dilation.

But no method of culture is found ſo much to fertilize the human mind, as that kind of diſcipline which is called the claſſical. A prince, therefore, though he ſhould certainly be educated in private, ought to be trained according to the modes which the experience of ages has eſtabliſhed as the moſt ſucceſsful in a public ſeminary. No whimſical ſyſtems of pragmatical and conceited tutors ſhould be admitted. The boy ſhould be taught his grammar like other boys; for though there is indeed a royal game of the gooſe, I never have yet heard of a royal method of learning Latin and Greek; and if there be ſuch an one, the ſucceſs of it ſtill remains among the arcana of ſtate.

An heir to a crown ſhould certainly learn the antient as well as the modern languages; and he will not be able to learn them effectually, without learning them radically. Away then with the indolence and indulgence which grandeur fooliſhly claims as a happy privilege! Let the boy, if you wiſh him to maintain the dignity of a man and a king, be early enured to mental labour. Let his memory be exerciſed in learning the rules of Lilly's grammar. Let him be confined

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to his books and papers all the morning, and part of the evening, from the age of five to nineteen. The maids of honour will cry out ſhame: the ſycophantic herd of young noblemen, who crowd, with all the ſervility of their own footmen, around a throne, will repine that they cannot have an opportunity of introducing themſelves to the familiarity of the future King; but regard neither the fooliſh exclamations of vanity, nor the mean murmurs of ſelf-intereſt. Proceed with him regularly, from the fables of Phædrus to the philoſophy of Cicero, from the Cyropædia of Xenophon to the hiſtories and politics of Herodotus, Thucydides, Livy, Salluſt, and Polybius. Let his ear be familiarized to the fine language and ſentiments of Cicero and Demoſthenes, and his heart ennobled by the examples of the brighteſt characters of Greece and Rome.

Why ſhould his ſuperintendants be ſo cruel as not to cultivate in him a taſte for the beauties of poetry, or leave him unacquainted with Homer and Virgil? An elegant taſte, an humanized diſpoſition, an enlightened underſtanding, will adorn him more than the jewels in his crown, or the robes of his coronation. It will give him an internal ſource of happineſs, and will teach him rather to ſeek his pleaſures in a humane and generous conduct, than in the diſplay of pomp, or the indulgence of luxury. A prince, with a mind uncultivated, muſt neceſſarily take his chief delight in miſchief, in vice, or in unprincely occupations; but he, whoſe underſtanding is illuminated, and heart purified by a right diſcipline, will deſerve a title which has been often unjuſtly claimed——that of Heaven's Vicegerent.

When, by the cloſe application of ten or twelve years, a firm and broad baſis is laid of antient learning, let the ſtripling be introduced to the avenues of all the parts of human knowledge. Let the years which elapſe till he is of the age of three or four and twenty, be employed in acquiring proper ideas of all the objects, whether natural or civil, which ſurround him, under the tuition of a governor who poſſeſſes, not only official and titular, but perſonal authority, under one who is not frightened by the laughter of faſhion, of diſſipation,

dissipation, or of false philosophy; from filling his pupil's mind with moral virtues, and a sincere, not a political, veneration for christianity.

All this is a general preparation for the particular pursuits which become a King, and these are law and politics. But I mean not the narrow system of a mercenary practitioner and a cunning statesman, but the general principles of justice and equity; the wise maxims of government as it is instituted for the diffusion of happiness and virtue among the individuals of a nation, and not for the extension of empire, or the accumulation of destructive opulence. What a situation is a Throne for the indulgence of the feelings of a christian, and of a compassionate friend to wretched human nature! I would not, indeed, refer a prince for maxims of equity and government to Puffendorf and Grotius, the dull and unfeeling deliberators of questions on which a good heart and understanding can intuitively decide; but to his own heart and eyes, to his own enlightened reason, to the page of scripture, and to the volumes of authenticated history.

Princes have been almost uniformly confined in their views to the narrow systems of worldly politicians, and of interested courtiers. False grandeur has fascinated themselves, and their subjects. National prosperity has been estimated by fleets and armies, commerce and revenues. The morals, the health, the religion of the individuals, are considerations which do not claim the attention of a cabinet, but are discarded as subjects of declamation in the church or in the schools. "What "is it to me," cries aloud the Wisdom of this world, "while his lordship knows how to superintend the "navy, whether he believes in God or the Devil, and "whether he has kept such laws as I neither understand "nor value, the laws of relative and christian *duty?*" A nation thus advances in the devious paths of a false wisdom, till an incensed Providence, wearied with repeated provocation, visits it at last with a curse. Look from the Ganges to the Thames, and acknowledge the evident visitation of a chastising Providence.

Imagination triumphs in the prospect of a golden age, when Princes, and all who are concerned in the executive

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parts of government, shall be early formed to virtue, to learning, to humanity, to religion. How happy, it has been said, would it be, if Philosophers, who are justly so called, were Kings; or Kings, Philosophers!

No. CXXXVI. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS ON THE ART OF PRINTING.

THAT the desire of knowledge for its own sake, is an adventitious passion unknown to nature, and to be classed among the refinements of civilization, is an opinion unsupported by experience, and derogatory from the native dignity of a rational creature. Fancy and sentiment, the powers of the intellect, and the feelings of the heart, are, perhaps, by nature equally strong and susceptible in the rude Indian, and in the polished member of an established community. Perhaps these similar powers would be equally fit for exertion, and these propensities equally importunate for gratification, if the savage were not constantly engaged in providing for that necessary sustenance, which, without his own interposition, is commonly secured to the philosopher.

The pupil of nature, under all his disadvantages, feels the impulse of a species of literary curiosity, and seeks its satisfaction. He possesses the faculty of memory; he must therefore, without the co-operation of his will, remember many of the impressions received by the senses: he has a power of reflection, which will teach him to reason and draw inferences, without designing it, from the objects of his experience and observation. He feels within himself an imagination, capable of recalling past ideas of pleasure and pain, and apt to be delighted by beauty, novelty, and grandeur. Every natural exertion of natural faculties is attended with satisfaction. He feels it from the unpremeditated exertions of the mental powers; he tacitly acknowledges it to be congenial to his mind, and

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of courſe endeavours to repeat, to extend, and to prolong it: but the objects which fall under the notice of his own ſenſes, and his perſonal experience, are inſufficient in number and importance to ſatisfy his capacity. He is led to enquire what paſſed among his forefathers, and in his turn is requeſted by his progeny to communicate his own remarks, ſuperadded to the information of his anceſtors.

Such, probably, is the origin of Tradition; a mode of communicating knowledge, once univerſal, and ſtill, perhaps, ſubſiſting in the newly diſcovered iſlands of the Pacific Ocean, on the banks of the Senegal, and at the foot of the Andes. Beneath the ſhade of his plantain, the patriarch Indian ſtill recites the divine origin of his tribe or family the warlike actions of his anceſtor, and of his own perſonal proweſs. The attentive audience carry away the tale, and ſupply the defects of memory by the aid of imagination. The ſtory ſpreads, time gives it a ſanction, and at laſt it is found to conſtitute the moſt authentic hiſtory, however obſcure and fabulous, of the origin of a nation, after it has emerged from barbariſm, and is become the ſeat of arts and learning.

In the earlieſt and rudeſt ſtate of literature, if we may give that appellation to the efforts of the intellectual faculties where letters are unknown, is often produced the moſt animated, and perhaps moſt perfect, though leaſt artificial, poetry. Hiſtoric truth is, indeed, little regarded, as it is addreſſed to reaſon rather than to fancy; but poetic compoſition appears with marks of genius approaching to inſpiration. From his memory, or his invention, or from both, the ſavage is heard to pour forth the ſong of war, and to warble the notes of love, warm with the ſentiments of a feeling heart, and compenſating the want of regularity and grace, by the ſtrength and vivacity of natural expreſſion.

If we believe the repreſentations of ſome writers, poems equal in length to the moſt celebrated Epopeas of Greece and Rome, have been handed down, without the aid of letters, from the remoteſt antiquity to the preſent day; and in our own country and times, traditionary tales, poetic and proſaic, are known

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to abound in that loweſt claſs among us, who are yet unacquainted with the elements of learning. The tenant of the cottage, ſtupid and incurious as he may appear to the polite obſerver, has his fund of entertaining knowledge, and knows how to enliven the winter evening with tales of fairies, giants, and inchantments, which he believed on the word of his progenitors, and which his hearers receive with equal pleaſure and credulity, intending to tranſmit them to the riſing generation.

The early appearance, and the univerſality of traditional learning, ſeems to eſtabliſh the opinion, that the love of knowledge is among the firſt and importunate deſires inherent to the human heart. We ſee it believing abſurdity, and admiring nonſenſe; we ſee it bearing one of the ſtrongeſt characteriſtics of natural inclinations, a proneneſs to neglect reaſon in purſuit of gratification.

This ardent love of knowledge which gave riſe to tradition, ſoon invented improvements which ſuperſeded its general neceſſity. Tradition was ſoon found to be attended with great inconveniences, and to be defective in its moſt perfect ſtate. A thouſand important circumſtances muſt neceſſarily elude the moſt retentive memory, and beſide the evils reſulting from the weakneſs of that faculty, and from the general inclination to exaggerate and embelliſh the ſimplicity of truth, the want of written ſtandards to appeal to, afforded conſtant opportunities for impoſition. Uprightneſs of intention, and ſtrength of memory, were not always united in thoſe who undertook the recital of events. Accuracy and juſtneſs of repreſentation were rare, and the civil hiſtory of every people, without a ſingle exception, is, in its firſt periods, dark and incoherent, ſuch indeed as might be expected from oral authority.

The inventor of means to ſupply the defects of memory, and to preclude the opportunity of deceit, it is obvious to conclude, would be conſidered as a great benefactor to mankind, and elevated by the exuberant gratitude of a rude age, above the rank of humanity. To Theuth, the inventor of letters among the Egyptians, and to the ſame perſonage, under the name of

of Hermes among the Greeks, divine honours were paid; an apotheosis surely more justifiable on principles of reason, than that of Bacchus the cultivator of the vine, or of Hercules, the cleanser of a stable.

To communicate their discovery, the inventors of literary symbols found it necessary to mark them on some substance susceptible of impression or penetration. What that substance was is a subject of curious, but unimportant, enquiry. The original mode of inscribing the newly discovered characters, however conducted, was probably very imperfect; but as it happens in all discoveries of momentous consequence, the idea of it once started, was pursued with that general ardour and attention, which never fails to produce a great improvement. The stone, the palm leaf, the biblos or bark of the linden tree, the leaden tablet, the *papyrus* manufactured into the charta, the parchment, and the pugillares, respectively served, as progressive advancement suggested, or as convenience required, to receive the written lucubrations of the antient poet, philosopher, legislator, and historian.

That many of the noblest efforts of antient genius, though committed to writing on substances so frail as the papyrus, and so subject to erasure as the waxen tablet, should have reached the present age, is an event only to be accounted for by supposing, that their conspicuous beauties occasioned uncommon vigilance and solicitude in their preservation.

At a very late period, a substance formed of *macerated* linen, was found superior in beauty, convenience, and duration, and better adapted to the purposes of literature, than all the prior devices of mechanical ingenuity. It derived its name from the flag that grew on the banks of the Nile, which, though it in *some* degree resembled, it greatly excelled. Porous, yet of firm contexture, it admitted the inscription of characters with a facility, equalled only by the retention with which it preserved them. By the ease with which it is procured and inscribed, it rescued the antient authors from the possibility of oblivion, and may strictly be said

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to have formed that monument more durable than braſs, which a celebrated poet prophefied to himſelf with a confidence, juſtified at length by the accompliſhment of his prediction.

No. CXXXVII. ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH LED TO THE DISCOVERY OF THE ART OF PRINTING, WITH MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS ON IT.

THE buſineſs of tranſcribing the remains of Grecian and Roman literature, became an uſeful, an innocent, and a pleaſing employ to many of thoſe who, in the dark ages, would elſe have pined in the liſtleſs languor of monaſtic retirement. Exempt from the avocations of civil life, incapable of literary exertion from the want of books and opportunities of improvement, they devoted the frequent intervals of religious duty, to the tranſcription of authors whom they often little underſtood. The ſervile office of a mere copyiſt was not diſdained by thoſe who knew not to invent; and the writers in the ſcriptorium were inſpired with an emulation to excel, in the beauty and variety of their illuminations, the fidelity of their copy, and the multitude of their performances.

But when every letter of every copy was to be formed by the immediate operation of the hand, the moſt perſevering aſſiduity could effect but little. They appear not to have been written with the rapidity of a modern tranſcriber, but with a formal ſtiffneſs, or a correct elegance, equally inconſiſtent with expedition. They were therefore rare, and conſequently much valued, and whenever ſold, were ſold at a great price. Few indeed, but crowned and mitred heads, or incorporated communities, were able to procure a number ſufficient to merit the appellation of a Library; and even the boaſted libraries of princes and prelates, were ſuch, as are now eaſily exceeded by every private collection. To be poor, with whatever ability or inclination, was,

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at one time, an insurmountable obstacle to literary improvement: and, perhaps, we indulge an unreasonable acrimony in our general censure of Monkish sloth and ignorance, not considering that an involuntary fault ceases to be blameable; that ignorance is inevitable where the means of information are scarce; and that sloth is not to be avoided, where the requisites of proper employment are not attainable without great expence, or earnest solicitation.

It was, perhaps, less with a view to obviate these inconveniencies, than from the interested motives of deriving greater gain by exacting the usual price for copies multiplied with more ease and expedition, that a new mode was at length practised, derived from the Invention of the Art of Printing, a discovery which, of all those recorded in civil history, is of the most important and extensive consequence.

That the first productions of the press were intended to pass for manuscripts, we are led to conclude from the resemblance of the type to the written characters, from the omission of illuminations which were to be supplied by the pen to facilitate the deception, and from the inventor's concealment of his process, so far as to incur suspicion of witchcraft or magic, by which alone the first observers could account for the extraordinary multiplication of the transcripts or copies.

But the deceit was soon detected. The perfect resemblance in the shape of the letters, in the place and number of the words on every page, the singular correctness, and above all the numerous copies of the same author, inevitably led to a discovery of the truth. To conceal it, indeed, was no longer desired, when experience had suggested the great lucrative advantages, and the practicability of multiplying books without end by the process newly invented. It soon appeared, though it was not obvious at first, that the new mode would be more agreeable to the reader, as well as easier to the copyist, and that printed books would universally supersede the use of manuscripts, from a choice founded on judicious preference. The art was soon professed as a trade, and the business of copying, which had once afforded only amusement or gain to the curious and the idle, became the constant employment and support of

of a numerous tribe of artisans, and constituted a very considerable source of mercantile advantage.

Of an art, which, though it had yet acquired but small degrees of perfection, appeared of most extensive utility in religion, in politics, in literature, and even in commerce, no labour has been spared to investigate the history; but unfortunately, the enquirers into the origin of arts, instigated by the zeal of minute curiosity or push their researches too far, often discover them so rude, obvious, and inartificial at their commencement, as to reflect very little honour on those whom they ostentatiously exhibit as the earliest inventors. Such has been the result of the investigations of those who, dissatisfied with the commonly received opinions on the date of the invention of Printing, pretend to have discovered traces of it many years before the first production of Faustus, in 1457: and it is true, that the Speculum Salutis, and a few other books are extant, which are, on good reasons, judged to have been stamped, not printed *secundum artem*, long before the erection of a press at Mentz: but the mode in which they were executed, like the Chinese, bears but little resemblance to the art of printing, properly so called: it appears not, by any historical memoir, to have suggested the first hint of it, and is too imperfect to deserve notice as even the infant state of this momentous invention.

National pride, like the pride of individuals, is often founded on slight or dubious pretensions. Thus have Germany and Holland contended, with all the warmth of party, for the imaginary honour of giving birth to the Inventor of Printing, who, after all, was probably led to the discovery, not by the enlarged views of public utility, but by fortunate circumstances concurring with the desire of private and pecuniary advantage: but though the history of Printing, like all other histories, is in some degree obscure and doubtful at its earliest period, though Strasburg has boasted Mentel, and Harlaem Coster, as the inventor; yet is there great reason to conclude, that the few arguments advanced in their favour are supported only by forgery and falsehood: and we may safely assert, with the majority of

writers, and with the general voice of Europe, that the time of the invention was about the year 1440; the place Mentz, and the perſons Gutenberg, Fauſtus, and Schæffer, in conjunction.

He who wiſhes to trace the art in its gradual progreſs, from the wooden and immoveable letter to the moveable and metal type, and to the completion of the whole contrivance, will receive ſatisfactory information from the annals of the elaborate Mattaire. In the mean time, the eſſayiſt will avoid the repetition of facts already too well known and eſtabliſhed to admit additional illuſtration, and will think himſelf more properly employed in making reflections on the literary, the moral, the political, and the religious effects which have reſulted from the invention.

It is, indeed, generally true, that the hiſtory of a mechanical art affords but inſipid entertainment to a mind which is tinctured with the liberality of philoſophy, and the elegance of claſſic literature. It often exhibits manual excellence united with ſuch meanneſs of ſentiment, and vulgarity of manners, as unavoidably mingles diſguſt with admiration: but to the truth of this general remark, the annals of typography are a ſingular exception. Many are recorded to have laboured at the preſs, whoſe literary attainments would have done honour to the chair of a profeſſor. By their annotations, they illuſtrated the ſenſe and ſpirit of thoſe authors, the letter of whoſe writings they embelliſhed by the moſt beautiful and accurate impreſſions.

The names of the Aldi, of Robert and Henry Stephans, of Turnebus, and of many more who united mechanical ingenuity with profound erudition, will ever be remembered with reſpect and gratitude by the votary of antient learning. Happily for letters, at a time when the valuable works of antiquity were contained in manuſcripts ſometimes illegibly written, and often mutilated or corrupted, a number of men aroſe whoſe knowledge and ſagacity enabled them to aſcertain and exhibit, by the newly diſcovered art, the genuine reading. Such men were greater benefactors to mankind, than many who have been more celebrated; nor is it an ill-grounded glory which Italy derives from her

her Manutii, Germany from her Froben, France from her Stephani, the Netherlands from their Plantin, and England from her Caxton.

Every ſtudent looks back with regret on thoſe times when an Eraſmus corrected what an Aldus printed; when, like the painter of antiquity, a printer expoſed his production to the paſſenger, and ſolicited cenſure; and when the legiſlature of a great nation provided by a ſtatute, with a penalty, for the correctneſs of publications.

To preſer, with implicit attachment, all the earlier productions of the art to the more recent, were to be actuated with the narrow ſpirit of a typographical virtuoſo; yet the truth is, what indeed was to be expected from the ſuperior learning of thoſe who were formerly concerned in the proceſs, they ſurpaſs the more ſplendid editions of latter times, in the one great excellence of correctneſs. It is true, indeed, that the ſungous production of the modern writer, appears with a ſplendour of paper, and brilliancy of type, unknown in the fifteenth century; and, if the work is written in the vernacular language, and on a familiar ſubject, is perhaps ſufficiently correct. It is true, likewiſe, that conſidering the expedition of the artiſan, the degree of correctneſs with which the common papers of intelligence appear, is really wonderful, and affords a ſtriking inſtance how much induſtry can effect, when ſtimulated to exertion by the hope of that abundant gain, which our more than Athenian love of political information conſtantly ſupplies. Of ſuch diſpatch, a Plantin would, perhaps, have denied the poſſibility. Books of learning, however, eſpecially when written in the dead languages, are indeed more ſlowly brought forth, but hardly with equal perfection. The miſtaken avarice, and the groſs ignorance of the modern editor, often fruſtrates all the paſt labour of printers, correctors, and commentators, who have toiled with aching eyes in the reviſal of proof ſheets, and in the collation of manuſcripts.

By one of thoſe laudable artifices which prevent private avarice from withholding public benefits, the art was ſtolen from Harlaem, and brought to Oxford

by Frederic Corſelles. But while we are conſidering the introduction of printing into England, not to commemorate the names of Bourchier, Turnour, and Caxton, who were moſt inſtrumental to it, would be an omiſſion equally negligent and ungrateful. Nor ſhould the tribute of praiſe be any longer withheld by neglect from earl Tiptoft and earl Rivers, who, at this period, were reſtorers and patrons of learning in our own country, and who contributed to its advancement in imitation of their contemporary, Pius the ſecond in Italy, both by their munificence and example.

No. CXXXVIII. ON THE MORAL, POLITICAL, AND RELIGIOUS EFFECTS OF PRINTING, WITH CONCLUDING REMARKS.

THE literary advantages derived from the invention of printing are ſo obvious, that to point them out with all the formality of diſquiſition is unneceſſary.

But the moraliſt, no leſs than the man of letters, finds himſelf intereſted in the conſequences reſulting from the mechanical mode of multiplying the copies of books. To this cauſe, he attributes that change in the manners and ſentiments which has taken place within the interval of a century or two, and which cannot eſcape even ſuperficial obſervation. Philoſophy once preſerved among a choſen few, with the ſelfiſhneſs of an Alexander, who reprimanded Ariſtotle for divulging the ſecrets of ſcience, has now diffuſed its influence on the mean as well as the great, the gay and the fair as well as the ſevere and ſtudious, the merchant and the manufacturer as well as the contemplative profeſſor. Pamphlets and manuals, on every ſubject of human enquiry, are circulated by the aſſiduous trader at a ſmall price, among the loweſt ranks of the community, the greateſt part of whom have been furniſhed with the ability of reading by an eleemoſynary education. A tincture

tincture of letters, which was once rare, and formed a ſhining character, has pervaded the maſs of the people, and in a free country like our own, where it is not checked in its operation by political reſtraints, has produced remarkable effects on the general ſyſtem of morality. Much good has reſulted from it: happy, if it had not been mixed with that characteriſtic alloy of human happineſs, much evil. Learning thus communicated to the vulgar, has taught the ſavage ferocity of groſs ignorance to yield to gentleneſs and humanity; but it has alſo ſuperinduced a general indolence, refinement, and falſe delicacy. It has been the means of exhibiting to the beſt advantage, the image of virtue in her natural beauty; but it has alſo held up to view the meretricious charms of vice in the falſe ornaments ſuperadded by a corrupt imagination. It has been a ſteady light to lighten men in the path of truth; but it has alſo been an *ignis fatuus* leading them into the mazes of error, and plunging them at laſt into the depths of miſery. If it has often tempted us to boaſt of living in an enlightened age, it has no leſs frequently induced us to regret the old times of ignorant, but innocent ſimplicity. If we ſometimes look back with a mixture of ſcorn and pity on the unlettered ages that preceded us; we alſo ſometimes confeſs ourſelves ready to renounce the pride of ſuperior knowledge for the ſolid happineſs of that national probity, which, though it may not have receded, has not kept pace with our progreſs in ſcientific improvement. Here, however, the old maxim will be ſuggeſted to every one, that a good argument againſt the uſe of a thing, cannot be drawn from its abuſe. It will at the ſame time be remembered, that the preſent times are ever ſeen through the fallacious mediums of prejudice and paſſion; and that the cenſures of the ſatiriſt may not ariſe from real degeneracy, but that common propenſity which has, in all ages, given riſe to invectives againſt the prevailing manners. If it is true, that improvement in knowledge is a natural and laudable object of human deſires, the more general that improvement, the happier and more perfect is human nature, and the more eſtimable that art from which it is principally derived.

But

But however equivocal the effects of the univerſal diſſemination of literature on the morals of thoſe who cannot judge and ſelect with the ſame eaſe with which they can procure books, there is no doubt of their being beneficial among others, whoſe judgment is directed by liberal culture, and whoſe ſentiments are undepraved by faſhionable diſſipation. Before the introduction of printing, the ſtudent, who, revolted at the idea of languiſhing in the ſloth of Monkery, had ſcarcely any ſcope for his induſtry and talents, but in the puerile perplexities of a ſcholaſtic philoſophy, as little adapted to call forth the virtues of the heart, as to promote valuable knowledge: but ſince that important æra in the annals of learning, every individual, even the pooreſt of the Muſes' train, has been enabled to obtain, without difficulty, the works of thoſe great maſters in practical and ſpeculative ethics, the Greek and Roman philoſophers. He is taught by the ſame inſtructors who formed a Xenophon and a Scipio, and can hold converſe, in the retirements of his chamber, with the celebrated ſages of antiquity, with nearly the ſame advantages as if he actually ſat with Socrates beneath the ſhade of the plane tree, walked with Plato in the Lyceum, or accompanied Cicero to his Tuſculan villa.

Whatever tends to diffuſe new light on the underſtandings of a whole people, or to effect a change in the general ſyſtem of manners, ſoon produces a ſimilar revolution in their political character. Airy fabrics, which, when ſeen through the miſts of ignorance, were ſuppoſed to be realities, vaniſhed at the light of learning, as the inchantment is diſſolved by the operation of the Taliſman. The ſun of ſcience aroſe, the proſpect cleared around, and they who had ſhuddered at the ideal phantoms of the night, ventured to walk forth and examine every object that ſolicited attention. The prejudices on the ſubject of civil government, formed by ignorance and foſtered by the policy of power, when once the art of printing had multiplied books, and roufed the ſpirit of enquiry, ſoon gave way to the dictates of inſtructed reaſon. The natural rights of mankind became well underſtood, the law of nations

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was attended to, implicit obedience was neither exacted on the one part, with the same rigour as before, nor paid on the other with equal servility. What remained of the feudal institutions could not long subsist, when more liberal ideas of the nearer equality of mankind were imbibed from books, and when a great degree of dignity and power was attainable, not only by birth and riches, but by mere literary eminence. The distinction of Vassal and Lord soon ceased to be the only one in the community, when men were led by the ease with which books were procured, to aspire after the fine arts, philosophy, and erudition. Such studies infused a noble generosity of spirit, which scorned to pay an abject homage to ignorant opulence. Ignorant opulence, indeed, could not maintain, or even exact by force, that truly valuable respect which is naturally due, and cheerfully paid, to personal dignity. Men, by reading, were led to reflect, and by reflection discovered, that they had been under an error when they looked up to their governors as to a superior Order of Beings; but at the same time they learned the happiness of living under a well-regulated constitution, the duty of obedience in return for protection, and the political necessity of subordination. History, and treatises of politics, suggested just notions of civil society, and a sense of expediency produced at length that voluntary acquiescence which was once exacted by pretensions to divine right, or by the immediate interposition of authority. The lust of dominion which disgraced the iron reign of the sullen and unlettered tyrant, was succeeded, in the enlightened father of his people, by a spirit of benevolence and philosophical moderation. That power which was once placed on the sandy foundation of popular prejudice and fear, when those fears and prejudices were dissipated by free disquisition, acquired an establishment on the basis of reason. Nor let it be deemed idle speculation to attribute these salutary consequences to the invention of printing, since to him, who attentively considers all its remote, as well as proximate effects, it will appear fully adequate to their production. When all ranks of people on a sudden were enabled to exert with vigour the faculty of thinking,

ing, which had only lain dormant for want of opportunity, the effect on the moral and political world muſt be as ſtriking, as that which takes place in the phyſical at the return of day after night, and ſpring after winter.

Thus has Fauſtus and Mentz, by an art invented and exerciſed with views of private emolument, ultimately contributed more to the empires, and cauſed more important events in their hiſtory, than all the efforts of the renowned conquerors and lawgivers of antiquity. That the ſame art which has produced theſe ſalutary conſequences, has alſo been the means of encouraging licentiouſneſs, of animating ſedition, and kindling the flames of civil war, is to be attributed to that lamentable condition of human affairs which is obſerved to counterbalance every good, with a proportion of concomitant evil.

To the Art of Printing, however, it is acknowledged, we owe the reformation. It has been juſtly remarked, that if the books of Luther had been multiplied only by the ſlow proceſs of the hand-writing, they muſt have been few, and would have been eaſily ſuppreſſed by the combination of wealth and power: but, poured forth in abundance from the preſs, they ſpread over the land with the rapidity of an inundation, which acquires additional force from the efforts uſed to obſtruct its progreſs. He who undertook to prevent the diſperſion of the books once iſſued from the preſs, attempted a taſk no leſs arduous than the deſtruction of the Hydra. Reſiſtance was vain, and religion was reformed: and we who are chiefly intereſted in this happy revolution muſt remember, amidſt the praiſes beſtowed on Luther, that his endeavours had been ineffectual, unaſſiſted by the invention of Fauſtus.

How greatly the cauſe of religion has been promoted by the art, muſt appear when it is conſidered, that it has placed thoſe ſacred books in the hand of every individual, which, beſides that they were once locked up in a dead language, could not be procured without great difficulty. The numerous comments on them of every kind, which tend to promote piety, and to form the chriſtian philoſopher, would probably never have been

been compoſed, and certainly would not have extended their beneficial influence, if typography had ſtill been unknown. By that art, the light, which is to illuminate a dark world, has been placed in a ſituation more advantageous to the emiſſion of its rays: but if it has been the means of illuſtrating the doctrines, and inforcing the practice of religion, it has alſo, particularly in the preſent age, ſtruck at the root of piety and moral virtue, by propagating opinions favourable to the ſceptic and the voluptuary. It has enabled modern authors wantonly to gratify their avarice, their vanity, and their miſanthropy, in diſſeminating novel ſyſtems ſubverſive of the dignity and happineſs of human nature: but though the perverſion of the art is lamentably remarkable in thoſe volumes which iſſue, with offenſive profuſion, from the vain, the wicked, and the hungry, yet this good reſults from the evil, that as truth is great and will prevail, ſhe muſt derive freſh luſtre, by diſplaying the ſuperiority of her ſtrength in the conflict with ſophiſtry.

Thus the Art of Printing, in whatever light it is viewed, has deſerved reſpect and attention. From the ingenuity of the contrivance, it has ever excited mechanical curioſity; from its intimate connection with learning, it has juſtly claimed hiſtorical notice; and from its extenſive influence on morality, politics, and religion, it is now become a ſubject of very important ſpeculation.

But however we may felicitate mankind on the invention, there are, perhaps, thoſe who wiſh, that, together with its compatriot art of manufacturing gunpowder, it had not yet been brought to light. Of its effects on literature, they aſſert, that it has increaſed the number of books, till they diſtract, rather than improve the mind; and of its malignant influence on morals, they complain, that it has often introduced a falſe refinement, incompatible with the ſimplicity of primitive piety and genuine virtue. With reſpect to its literary ill conſequence, it may be ſaid, that though it produces to the world an infinite number of worthleſs publications, yet true wit and fine compoſition will ſtill retain their value, and it will be an eaſy taſk for critical diſ-

cernment to ſelect theſe from the ſurrounding maſs of abſurdity; and though, with reſpect to its moral effects, a regard to truth extorts the confeſſion, that it has diffuſed immorality and irreligion, divulged with cruel impertinence the ſecrets of private life, and ſpread the tale of ſcandal through an empire; yet theſe are evils which will either ſhrink away unobſerved in the triumphs of time and truth over falſehood, or which may, at any time, be ſuppreſſed by legiſlative interpoſition.

The *Liberty of the Preſs* is a ſubject not to be touched upon, but with a trembling caution. Every ſtudent muſt abhor the thought of erecting the tribunal of a ſtar-chamber in the republic of letters; every lover of his country muſt reject with diſdain the propoſal of ſilencing the voice of truth by the menace of authority: but, at the ſame time, every true friend to learning and mankind, who, free from the enthuſiaſm of party, underſtands their real intereſt, would rejoice to ſee the day when the advantages of the Liberty of the Preſs ſhall be unalloyed with thoſe evils of its licentiouſneſs; which, without ſome expedient of controul, will prevail, as long as there are, on one hand, indigent and avaricious publiſhers, and on the other, factious and unprincipled readers.

But innovations in a particular intimately connected with civil liberty, will ever be guarded againſt in a free country, with all the vigilance of jealous circumſpection. Men will often patiently ſupport the preſent evil, the nature and extent of which is aſcertained by experience, rather than incur the hazard of a future detriment, which may poſſibly outweigh the beneficial ends propoſed. If then the unreſtrained uſe of the Preſs is, as it has been commonly termed, the palladium of liberty, may it never be taken from us by fraud or force; and perhaps the evils reſulting from the abuſe of this privilege are of that kind, which, when permitted to take their courſe, ultimately remedy themſelves: for it is certain, that there may be a period, and perhaps our own times approach to it, when the petulant licentiouſneſs of public prints and pamphlets becomes too contemptible to gain attention, and

therefore

therefore fails of producing a malignant effect. Avarice will ceaſe to publiſh, when men are too wiſe to purchaſe; faction and vanity will be ſilent, when they no longer find an audience: but penal and coercive meaſures are known to give weight to the nonſenſe of ſedition and impiety, by alarming that attention which it could not otherwiſe excite, and to occaſion the evils intended to be obviated; as the means uſed to extinguiſh a flame ſometimes increaſe its violence.

But referring the diſcuſſion of this complicated ſubject to legiſlative wiſdom, we may venture to expreſs an honeſt wiſh without danger of preſumption; and ſurely all the good and enlightened part of mankind will ſympathize in the deſire, That the time may not be diſtant, when the qualities of the heart ſhall be cultivated with the ſame general ardour as the powers of the underſtanding; when the affectation of ſingularity, and the love of money, ſhall no longer multiply treatiſes tending to teach the people a falſe philoſophy, an erroneous belief, or a factious conduct; when the Art of Printing ſhall no more be perverted to embelliſh vice and juſtify folly, but operating in the accompliſhment of its proper purpoſes, at once promote the intereſt, which cannot indeed without natural violence be ſeparate, of ſound learning and unaffected virtue.

No. CXXXIX. CURSORY THOUGHTS ON SATIRE AND SATIRISTS.

THE good reception which that ſpecies of poetry, called Satire, has commonly met with in the world, is perhaps owing to ſome diſpoſitions in the human nature not the moſt amiable. It derives not its power of pleaſing, like other poetry, from its effects on the imagination. It raiſes no enchanting proſpects; it is not neceſſarily employed in fiction. A ſpirit of indignation is its eſſential principle, and by cauſing a ſimilar ſpirit in the reader, it gently gratifies the irascible paſſions.

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It muſt be owned, that it has ſeldom anſwered its oſtenſible end of reforming the age. Yet allowing it to be of little uſe in reformation, it is often compoſed with ſuch evident marks of genius as render it intereſting to men of taſte. And though ſpleen may have given riſe to its firſt production, and the love of cenſure enſured its ſucceſs, yet the beauties of the compoſition will cauſe it to be read, even by thoſe who diſapprove perſonal invective, long after the reſentment that occaſioned it has ſubſided.

Horace, the politeſt writer whom the world ever produced, adopted ſatirical writing, and ſucceeded in it, though there is every reaſon to believe that his natural diſpoſition was not ſevere. The truth is, he was a man of the world, as well as a man of reflection, and wrote his remarks on men and things in careleſs verſe; not without cenſuring them indeed, but without indulging the aſperity of ſarcaſm. He probed every wound with ſo gentle a hand, that the patient ſmiled under the operation. The gay friend of Mæcenas had lived in courts, and knew too much of the world to think he could reform the gay and voluptuous part of it by abrupt ſeverity.

Not ſo the ſtern Juvenal. With all the warmth of a zealot in the cauſe of virtue, he pours his majeſtic verſe, and, amid the moſt ſpirited invective and the fineſt morality, emits many a luminous irradiation of poetry beautifully deſcriptive.

His predeceſſor Perſius had afforded him a noble model. He improved on it in nothing but perſpicuity. Perſius is all fire, ſpirit, animation. The frequency of his interrogations rouſes the attention of the reader, and it is not eaſy to read and underſtand him without catching the glow with which he evidently wrote. If his obſcurity aroſe from fear, it does not indeed depreciate his merit as a writer; but it has cauſed him to be leſs read and admired than he deſerves. The laſt lines of his ſecond ſatire are alone ſufficient to entitle him to immortality.

The Engliſh ſeem to have copied the manner of Juvenal rather than of Horace. Our national ſpirit is indeed of the manly and rougher kind, and feels ſomething

thing congenial with itſelf in the vehemence of the ſullen Juvenal.

The Roman is remarkably harmonious. But Donne, his imitator, ſeems to have thought roughneſs of verſe, as well as of ſentiment, a real grace. It is ſcarcely poſſible, that a writer who did not ſtudiouſly avoid a ſmooth verification, could have written ſo many lines without ſtumbling on a good one. Pope has revived his fame by attuning his harſh numbers; a work whoſe very excellence makes us regret that a genius ſo fertile as was the bard's of Twickenham, ſhould have waſted its vigour in paraphraſes and tranſlations.

This verſatile poet has imbibed the very ſpirit of Horace. Nor can the mere Engliſh reader obtain, by the tranſlations of Creech or of Francis, ſo clear and adequate an idea of the true Horatian manner, as from the liberal imitations of Pope.

Dryden ſeems to have preferred the model of his favourite Juvenal. His nervous line was well adapted to ſatirical compoſition. He ſays himſelf, "he could "write ſeverely, with more eaſe than he could write "gently." His Abſalom and Achitophel, and his Mac Flecknoe, are maſter-pieces and models in the ſerious and vehement kind of ſatire.

Boileau ſeems to have blended with judgment the manner of Horace and Juvenal. Yet whatever degree of elegance he poſſeſſes, the natural monotony of French verſe tires an ear accuſtomed to the various harmony of our Engliſh poets. The French language never appears ſo mean as in the heroic couplet. He who reads the Henriade, and at the ſame time thinks of Milton, Dryden, Garth, or Pope, muſt cloſe the volume with all the loathing of diſguſt. He who reads Boileau, will find his improving imitator Pope riſe in his opinion. Pope rouſes the attention by all the changes of muſical modulation; Boileau ſooths it to dull repoſe by the lullaby of ſimilar pauſes uniformly repeated.

A poet of our own, little attended to at preſent, once enjoyed a very high degree of fame as a ſatirical writer. Oldham has been called the Engliſh Juvenal. His ſatire on the Jeſuits has indeed much of the ſpirit of Juvenal. It diſplays wit, force, pungency, and a very

very copious invention; but it is no leſs diſtinguiſhed by a vulgarity, which muſt prevent Oldham from keeping his place among the claſſics of our country. He has laſhed the Jeſuits with deſerved and unrelenting rigour; but though ſevere puniſhment is often neceſſary, yet to ſee it inflicted with the wanton cruelty of an aſſaſſin, is not agreeable. There are ſome works of poetry as well as of painting, which, though well performed as pieces of art, loſe the praiſe their excellence demands, by the ſhocking nature of their repreſentations.

A later ſatiriſt, Dr. Young, is ſtill read with pleaſure. But he has the fault of Seneca, of Ovid, of Cowley; a profuſe and unſeaſonable application of wit. His ſatires have been juſtly called a ſtring of epigrams. A lover of originality, he did not regard models. Had he endeavoured to imitate Juvenal or Perſius, he would have avoided this fault. Thoſe great maſters were too much engroſſed by the importance of their ſubjects to fall into the puerility of witticiſm. There is alſo ſomething in Young's verſification which a good ear does not approve.

But even Young, popular as he was, has been eclipſed by a poet who has ſhone with the effulgence and the inſtability of a meteor. Churchill poſſeſſed merit; a merit which was magnified when ſeen through the medium of party, beyond that degree which it was able to ſupport. When reaſon at laſt viewed what paſſion had exaggerated, ſhe was diſguſted with the diſappointment, and turned away with neglect. Thus the celebrated Churchill, with whoſe applauſe the town re-echoed, is ſinking to an oblivion which he hardly deſerves; for though he wrote many careleſs lines and many dull paſſages, yet the greater part of his productions diſplayed a genuine vein of ſatirical genius.

Within a few years Satire has re-aſſumed her original rude form of ſcurrilous and petulant abuſe. An improved verſification has given a gloſs to illiberal, calumnious, and anonymous invectives. An undaunted effrontery, recommended by elegant verſe, has ſupplied the want of every claſſical and noble ornament. That it has been well received, is no proof of its ſolid excellence as compoſition, ſince, to the greater part of

readers,

readers, the abuſe which it laviſhly pours on public and private characters, is a ſufficient recommendation.

It differs from claſſical ſatire in this, as well as other circumſtances. Horace, Perſius, Juvenal, though ſometimes diſgraced by obſcenity, yet abound with fine moral ſentiments. They not only put vice to ſhame, but countenanced virtue, and pointed out the way to attain to it. But the ſatiriſts of our times ſeem to have little elſe in view, than to gratify private pique, or party prejudice. It is indeed ſcarcely to be expected, that in a degenerate age, many will be found to poſſeſs dignity of character and ſolidity of judgment, in a degree ſufficient to enable them to ſtand forth diſintereſted and efficient cenſors of prevailing folly and faſhionable vice.

No. CXL. ON LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS.

TO falſe and careleſs reaſoning moſt of the miſfortunes of life are to be attributed. Logic then, as an art, is perhaps ſo far uſeful in the conduct of life, as it ſuperinduces a habit of accurate reaſoning.

But what ſays experience? Is the man who has digeſted Burgerſdicius found to be wiſer in his actions than others? The beſt diſputant that ever conquered in the ſchools, when he has deſcended to the walks of common life, has been found no leſs prone to deviate into the paths of error, to be involved in the clouds of paſſion, and miſled by the falſe lights of imagination, than the buſy multitude who never heard the categories.

They who poſſeſs common ſenſe in a competent degree, will diſcover, with no other aid, the fallacy of wrong reaſoning. They who are deficient in it, will not find a ſubſtitute in the uſe of a ſyllogiſm.

The great numbers who ſupply civil and commercial offices, in which there is a conſtant neceſſity for the exertion of reaſon, and who conduct the moſt important affairs without the aid of ſcholaſtic logic, are proofs that vigorous nature wants not this ſlender aſſiſtance. To imagine

imagine that a well-formed mind cannot reaſon well without logic, is no leſs abſurd, than to ſuppoſe that the ſolid oak wants the ſupport of the ivy that creeps round it.

The beſt ſchool for the improvement of reaſon, after a competent education, is the living world. We find even the illiterate, who have ſpent their lives in conſtant action, poſſeſſing a very extenſive knowledge of things, and a moſt accurate method of judging of them; a knowledge and a method to which the cultivated but inexperienced reaſoner can ſeldom attain. It is common to ſee the learned academic, whoſe labours are at laſt rewarded by a rural benefice, unable, notwithſtanding his acquired ſtrength of reaſon, to cope with the rude ruſtic in a bargain for dues which the laws have allotted him.

It ſeems, then, that the gradual decay of ſcholaſtic logic, and the contempt in which ſyllogiſtic ſkill is held, is not unreaſonable. It contributes little to the benefit of ſociety. It is rather injurious to it, by drawing off that attention which might be uſefully beſtowed. What then ſhall we ſay? Muſt an art, which our forefathers have ſtudied from age to age, and to which many of us have devoted our firſt years at the univerſities, be exploded? A veneration is due to long eſtabliſhed opinions. The powers of judging, which ſtimulate the preſent age to innovation, were poſſeſſed by the paſt in equal perfection. Some reaſon they had for their inſtitutions. The ſame reaſon may perhaps remain to prevent the total abolition of them; for truth and reaſon are unchangeable. Our anceſtors eſtabliſhed logical ſtudies in the univerſities, becauſe in their days there were few other books to be obtained, and no other learning was prized. Their deſcendants muſt continue to beſtow on them a moderate attention, becauſe every part of knowledge contributes to accompliſh the profeſſed ſcholar. But they need give no more than a moderate attention, becauſe the improvements of philoſophy, and the great multiplication of books in every part of human learning, enable the ſtudent to ſpend his time and ſagacity more uſefully and more agreeably.

He who poſſeſſes the genius and taſte, together with the philoſophical ſpirit of the attic Harris, will do right

to

to cultivate them by ſtudying the unread works of antient logicians. Our Engliſh Ariſtotle, whoſe productions are at once the quinteſſence of elegance, and prodigies of analytical ingenuity, has pointed out flowers in thoſe paths of learning where thorns only were ſeen before. The Stagyrite was literally idolized; and had it been the fate of Harris to have lived a few centuries ago, he alſo would have been honoured with a ſubordinate deification. If any thing can reſtore a taſte for theſe languiſhing ſtudies, it is the grace which his ſtyle and his accuracy have given them.

For metaphyſics what can be ſaid? If every book that has been written on them, and thouſands have been written, were annihilated, not a ſingle individual in the great community of all mankind would in any one reſpect have juſt reaſon to lament the loſs. Mathematical and arithmetical ſtudies are ſpeculative, it is true; but they do not terminate in ſpeculation. They afford a great pleaſure, abſtractedly conſidered, by the full evidence with which they diſplay their truths; but they tend to obvious utility as well as to delight. The builder, the navigator, almoſt every mechanic art, is aſſiſted by geometry, and all men, without exception, benefited by arithmetic. But metaphyſics tend only to benight the underſtanding in a cloud of its own making, to loſe it in a labyrinth of its own contrivance.

Metaphyſics were once encouraged and cultivated, becauſe they ſerved the purpoſes of ſuperſtition. They involved theological ſubjects in a perplexity which the ſimple could never unravel. They gave an air of myſtery and depth, which caught the admiration of the vulgar. They are now employed, in a ſimilar manner, in the ſervice of infidelity. They have induced the half-learned and the conceited, thoſe who think they underſtand them, and thoſe who wiſh to be thought by others to underſtand them, to adopt, without being apprehenſive of danger, opinions fatal to their own happineſs and to the exiſtence of ſociety.

Even

Even when cultivated by the honeſt and truly ingenious, they exhibit an inſtance of blameable pride. They aim at a ſcience to which man can never attain. It is truly laughable, to obſerve a creature with hardly knowledge enough of the things around him to guide him with ſafety, perplexing himſelf with ontological enquiries into the nature of angels, and the eſſence of the devil.

The ontologiſts and pneumatologiſts, the nominales and reales, the doctores ſeraphici, and all the tribe of microſcopic philoſophers, are, in the preſent age of diſcernment, totally neglected. Even Malebranche and Locke, the moſt rational of the metaphyſicians, are daily loſing ground. As a taſk they are attended to in public ſeminaries, where ſome obſolete plan of ſtudy requires metaphyſical exerciſes; but the multitude of more agreeable works ſeldom leave time or inclination, to the ſtudent who is at liberty to chuſe his books, for the controverſy concerning innate ideas. A few, however, in the preſent times, have been ſo unfortunate, as to waſte their labour in defending materialiſm, in expatiating on liberty and neceſſity, in diffuſing ſcepticiſm, and in proving that man is no more than an animal. This ſentence and doctrine will probably induce them to prove, in their own perſons, that he is an *irritable animal*.

Such miſerable effects of metaphyſical reſearch have induced an amiable writer, whoſe heart and abilities vie with each other for excellence, to vindicate the nature and immutability of truth, to expoſe the futility of metaphyſics, to confound the devices of their patrons, and to eſtabliſh the natural rights of common ſenſe. This formidable champion has given the laſt fatal blow to languiſhing ſophiſtry; a blow which, that ſhe may never recover, every man muſt wiſh, who knows the baneful influence of a Hume's dark inventions, and who deſires to counteract it.

To put an end to ſpeculative error, it might perhaps, in ſome degree, be effectual to lay leſs ſtreſs upon metaphyſics in academical education. Thoſe who preſide over our ſeminaries are no leſs liberal than enlightened, and will ſurely, on ſome future day, if any part of the preſent ſyſtem of inſtruction is trifling or pernicious, renounce

renounce it with alacrity. But a proper deference to their reſpectable opinions renders it reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that an attention to this abſtruſe, though otherwiſe uſeleſs ſcience, may tend to give the young mind a habit of thinking with depth and preciſion. As a ſevere diſcipline, it may be advantageous. Many a manœuvre is taught the ſoldier in his courſe of preparation for war, which will ſeldom be uſeful in the field of battle.

All thoſe however who have little opportunity of being actively ſerviceable to others, have an unqueſtionable right to ſeek amuſement in abſtruſe ſpeculation, or in any other paſtime which is innocent. They may puzzle themſelves for diverſion even in metaphyſics. But if, in the courſe of their enquiries, they ſhould fall upon a wonderful diſcovery, which, when divulged, would diſturb the happy ignorance of mankind, let them for once be ſelfiſh, enjoy it in private, and withhold it from the community.

No. CXLI. ON LATIN VERSE AS AN EXERCISE AT SCHOOL.

NO part of claſſical education has been more generally cenſured and more firmly adhered to, than that of exerciſing boys in the compoſition of Latin poetry. The trite remark, that a poet is born, and not formed by diſcipline, has been urged againſt it. It has alſo been alledged, that the time beſtowed on it would be more advantageouſly ſpent in the ſtudy of things, and in acquiring a right method of expreſſing our ſentiments in humble proſe. It is abſurd enough, ſay the objectors, to exact a certain portion of Engliſh verſe from the ſcholar; but to perplex him with Latin verſe, at a time when he might be learning a thouſand uſeful things; what is it but extreme imprudence, countenanced indeed by general practice, but nevertheleſs both culpable and truly ridiculous?

They allow however, that the cuſtom is general, and of long duration. Surely then that degree of reſpect

reſpect is due to the general opinion of mankind, and to the wiſdom of our predeceſſors, which leads us to preſume, that there muſt have been ſome benefit perceived by experience from an inſtitution thus antient and univerſal. And it is natural to conſider, whether a few arguments may not be found in favour of a mode ſilently and uniformly purſued, amid the loud clamour every where raiſed againſt it.

The defenders of practices unjuſtly cenſured, often do an injury to their cauſe, by admitting none of the objections to be reaſonable. We will then allow, that to learn to make Latin verſe is to loſe time, when the ſcholar is deſtined to ſpend his life in commercial or in mechanical employments. But, at the ſame time, we muſt inſiſt on its utility to the man of independent fortune, to the divine, the lawyer, the phyſician, and perhaps to the accompliſhed military commander.

To all theſe an acquaintance with the claſſics will add an elegance, ſuch as tends to complete their characters as gentleman, as well as ſcholars. It is the finiſhing poliſh of education, and operates on the mind, like dancing on the perſon, by ſuperadding a graceful habit. But there is no method ſo well calculated to infuſe an intimate knowledge of an author, as to imitate and endeavour to rival his excellences. To write Virgilian verſe with true elegance, it is neceſſary to commit to memory every phraſe; to catch the very ſpirit of Virgil; to mark the varied pauſes of his verſes, the length of his periods, the peculiar grace of his expreſſions; and to give the whole compoſition a majeſtic dignity. All theſe requiſites to poetical compoſition in Latin, can only be acquired by a frequent and attentive peruſal of the noble Mantuan.

The firſt-fruits of genius produced by the fineſt writers that adorn our annals, were compoſitions in Latin verſe. Milton, at a boyiſh age, wrote it with great elegance. Cowley excelled in it early. Addiſon was much celebrated for his juvenile eſſays in it. Prior began with writing Latin epigrams. All the great men who have been educated at public ſchools, where it is invariably an exerciſe, were, during ſeveral years, obliged

obliged to compoſe it as a daily taſk; and though many of them were never diſtinguiſhed in poetry, yet they derived conſiderable advantages from the attempt, as will probably appear from the following reflections.

Difficulty is naturally painful; but to overcome it cauſes a very ſenſible pleaſure, and facilitates future conqueſts, by adding courage. To write Latin verſe, is certainly an arduous taſk to a young boy; but the authority of his maſter, and a ſpirit of emulation, urge him to attempt with alacrity what his own indolence would have led him to neglect. Long practice gives facility. He finds he has overcome what he once thought inſurmountable. When any new undertaking offers itſelf in future, with a difficult and forbidding aſpect, he is not affrighted; for he recollects, that he has already performed that which appeared to him impracticable. The exertion neceſſary to accompliſh what is not eaſy, has a natural tendency to give the mind freſh vigour.

A ſubject taken from a claſſic, a moral ſentiment, or an ingenious remark, is given to a boy to employ his leiſure during the intervals of ſchool. He is taught, that there muſt be an unity in his deſign; that he muſt invent a thought, on which he is to diſplay, if he can, good ſenſe, and Auguſtan wit, expreſſed in the moſt elegant verſification. This tends to give a knowledge of things, at the ſame time that it renders it neceſſary to call to his aſſiſtance all his claſſical phraſeology. He muſt revolve many ideas in his mind before this thought occurs. In this proceſs he exerciſes the powers of judgment, of diſcrimination, of taſte. He recollects all his reading, he reviews all he has ſeen and heard, he ſearches his books on ſimilar topics, and at once improves what he has obtained, and makes new acquiſitions.

He who has been converſant in great ſchools will have ſeen copies of verſes written as the exerciſes of an evening, in which were diſplayed wit, humour, fine language, ingenious turns, harmonious verſe, and very ſhrewd obſervations on men and things. Such were the Luſus Weſtmonaſterienſes; ſuch were many in the Muſæ Etonenſes, and ſuch are thouſands that have

have never yet been offered to the public view. It is a known truth, that many of the boys who were engaged in these useful sports of a fertile genius, afterwards became distinguished members of the literary or the political republic; and they owed much of that good reception which they met with in the world, to the fame and merit of classical scholarship, acquired at their school.

Every liberal scholar desires to extend his views, and to be enabled to derive literary pleasure from all that is capable of affording it. If he has formed no taste for modern Latin poetry, he will be a stranger to many most pleasing productions. But he cannot have a just relish for them, unless he has a knowledge of prosody, and of their various metres; and of these he can seldom have a perfect knowledge, such a knowledge as will enable him to judge of their finer graces, without having composed Latin poetry as an exercise.

It is certain, that none of the modern Latinists have equalled Virgil and Horace, and that the classical student can no where find entertainment so unmixed as in their original writings. But the daintiest fare that an Apicius ever invented, ceased to please when constantly repeated. Nor can he be said to have an undistinguishing taste, or a coarse appetite, who seeks variety in the writing of the Virgilian Vida, and in the sweet strains of our own Vincent Bourne. There is often a happy union of the beauties that distinguish Ovid, Tibullus, and Martial, in the Carmina Quadragesimalia. Rapin, Vanier, Buchanan, and Browne, seem to have written Latin verse with an ease, which would almost lead to a supposition that Latin was their vernacular language. In miscellaneous publications of our own and other nations, the man of taste will find a multitude of poematia, which he may read with pleasure, and without danger of corrupting the purity of his style.

Merely as the means of enjoying a sweet and innocent pleasure in greater perfection, of filling up a leisure hour with an elegant amusement, the composition of Latin verse may be justly recommended to the affluent and the generous youth, who enjoys, and knows how to value, a liberal education. Others, it must be owned, will be much better employed in learning their pence-table.

No

No. CXLII. ON THE INSENSIBILITY OF THE MEN TO THE CHARMS OF A FEMALE MIND CULTIVATED WITH POLITE AND SOLID LITERATURE. IN A LETTER.

SIR,

I AM the only daughter of a clergyman, who, on the death of my mother, which happened when I was about three years old, concentered his affections in me, and thought he could not display his love more effectually than in giving me a good education. His house was situated in a solitary village, and he had but little parochial duty, so that there was scarcely any thing to divert his attention from this object. He had ever been devoted to letters, and considered learning, next to virtue, as the noblest distinction of human nature.

As soon as I could read, I was initiated in Lilly's Grammar, and, before I was eight years old, could repeat every rule in it with the greatest accuracy. I was taught indeed all kinds of needle-work; but two hours in every day were invariably set apart for my improvement in Latin. I soon perfected myself in the elementary parts, and had read Phædrus and Cornelius Nepos with a strict attention to the grammatical construction of every word and phrase which they contained. From these I was advanced to Virgil and Horace. Under the direction of so good a classic as my father, I soon acquired a taste for their beauties, and not only read them through with great delight, but committed their more beautiful passages to memory.

My father was so well pleased with my proficiency, and with the task of instructing the object of his tendereſt love, that he resolved to carry my improvements higher, and to open to my view the spacious fields of Grecian literature. The Greek Grammar I mastered with great ease, and I found a sweetness in the language which amply repaid me for the little difficulties I sometimes encountered. From the Greek Testament

I proceeded

I proceeded to the Cyropædia of Xenophon, the Orations of Demosthenes, the dialogues of Plato, and the Iliad and Odyssey of Homer. That I received great improvement from this course, cannot be denied; but the pleasure of it alone was to me a sufficient reward. I was enabled to drink at the fountain-head, while others were obliged to content themselves with the distant and polluted stream. I found that no translations whatever, however accurately they might exhibit the sense of originals, could express the beauties of the language. I was possessed of a power of inspecting those volumes, in admiration of which the world has long agreed, but from which my sex has been for the most part unreasonably excluded. It was a noble privilege, and I value myself upon it; but I hope and believe I did not despise those who had not partaken of it solely for want of opportunities.

The French and Italian languages became easy after my acquaintance with the Latin, and my father was of opinion that they are indispensably necessary to the modern scholar. In French I read Rollin, Boileau, Fontenelle, Voiture, Bouhours, Bruyere, Rousseau, Voltaire, and Marmontel; In Italian, Petrarch, Tasso, Ariosto, Guicciardin, and the Cortegiano of Castiglione. All these gave me a degree of pleasure, which I am sure none would be without, who are capable of obtaining it.

After having laid a foundation in the languages, which I believe is seldom done with success but an early age, my father allowed me to feast without controul on the productions of my own country. The learning I had acquired enabled me to read them critically, and to understand all their allusions. The best writers abound so much in quotations, that I cannot help thinking that they who are unacquainted with the antient languages, must often be mortified at their inability to unlock the concealed treasure.

All the classical poets, from Shakespeare to Pope, were my study and delight. History, which my father always recommended as peculiarly suited to adorn the female mind, was a favourite pursuit. I digested Hume and Robertson, and took a pleasure in every biographical anecdote

anecdote I could collect. After reading a life, or the history of any particular event, I was always desired by my father to give my sentiments upon it in writing; an exercise which I found to be attended with great advantage.

I never penetrated deeply into the sciences, yet I could not rest satisfied without a superficial knowledge of astronomy, of the solar system, of experimental philosophy, and of geography mathematical, physical, and political. This little was necessary for rational conversation, and I had neither time nor taste for scientific refinements. Poetry was my delight, and I sometimes wrote it, as the partiality of my poor father led him to assert, in a pleasing manner.

I do not make it a merit of my own, because it was entirely owing to my father's direction, that with all my attention to books, I did not neglect the ornamental accomplishments. My father excelled in music, and he taught me to play on the harpsichord. He engaged a good master to instruct me in dancing, and he always cautioned me against that neglect of dress and of accurate cleanliness, which, he said, had sometimes involved literary ladies in deserved disgrace. He likewise inculcated the necessity of avoiding a pedantic manner of conversation, and strictly charged me never to be overbearing, or to shew in the company of others the least appearance of conscious superiority. I believe I may venture to say, that I complied with his directions, and that I talked with perfect ease among the superficial, and neither expressed nor felt contempt, except where vanity and affectation were combined with ignorance.

Yet, notwithstanding my improvements and my earnest endeavours to prevent them from becoming invidious, I find myself received in the world with less cordiality than I had reason to expect. My own sex stand too much in awe of me to bear me any affection. When I come into their company, an universal silence would prevail, if it were not interrupted by myself. Though I cannot say that I am treated rudely, yet I can easily perceive that the civilities I receive are constrained; and I have every reason to

believe, that no small pains are taken to traduce my character, and to ridicule my taste in dress, and all the circumstances of external behaviour. It is kindly hinted, that a little awkwardness and impropriety may be excused in a learned lady, and that dress and decorum are beneath the notice of a poetess.

I have no reason to think that my person is particularly disagreeable; yet, I know not how it is, I am avoided by gentlemen who are ambitious of the company of other ladies. They have dropt, in the hearing of some of my friends, that though they think me extremely clever, yet they cannot reconcile the ideas of female attractions and the knowledge of the Greek. They do not mean to detract from my praise; but they must own, that I am not the woman after their hearts. They entertain a notion, that a lady of improved understanding will not submit to the less dignified cares of managing a household. She knows how to make verses, says the witling, but give me the woman who can make a pudding.

I must confess, I ever thought it the most valuable recommendation of a wife to be capable of becoming a conversible companion to her husband; nor did I ever conceive that the qualifications of a cook-maid, a laundress, or a house-keeper, were the most desirable accomplishments in a partner for life. A woman of improved understanding and real sense is more likely to submit to her condition, whatever it may be, than the uneducated or the half-learned; and such an one will always be willing to superintend œconomy, when it becomes her duty; and to take an active part in household management; when the happiness of him she loves, and of herself, depends upon her personal interference.

The education of children in the earlier periods, particularly of daughters, naturally belongs to the mother. Her inclination to improve them, seconded by her ability to take the proper methods, must be attended with the most valuable effects. The world is acquainted with the happy consequences of a Cornelia's parental care. But it seems probable, that little nourishment of mind can be imbibed from a mother, whose ideas

ideas hardly ever wandered beyond the limits either of a kitchen or a dreſſing-room. Neither is there ſufficient reaſon to conclude, that ſhe whoſe intellectual acquiſitions enable her to entertain her huſband, and to form the minds of her children, muſt be incapable or unwilling to ſuperintend the table, and give a perſonal attention to domeſtic œconomy.

That learning belongs not to the female character, and that the female mind is not capable of a degree of improvement equal to that of the other ſex, are narrow and unphiloſophical prejudices. The preſent times exhibit moſt honourable inſtances of female learning and genius. The ſuperior advantages of boys education are, perhaps, the ſole reaſon of their ſubſequent ſuperiority. Learning is equally attainable, and, I think equally valuable, for the ſatisfaction ariſing from it, to a woman as a man. For my own part, I would not loſe the little I poſſeſs, to avoid all other diſagreeable conſequences of which I have juſt now complained.

No. CXLIII. ON PARENTAL INDULGENCE.

THE love of progeny ſeems to operate as ſtrongly in the brute creation as in the human ſpecies. during the helpleſs age of immaturity. The guidance of inſtinct, indeed, as it is more deciſively determinate, ſeems to bring up an offspring with leſs deviation from the purpoſes of nature, than the ſuperior faculty of reaſon. The greater acuteneſs of reaſon leads to heſitation, and involves in error, while it is diſtracted by the variety of objects it aſſembles for its choice. The bird never injures its young by repletion. The young, indeed, of few animals, when left to the care of the parent, without the interference of man, is found to periſh. But it is well known how large a proportion of children die under the age of two years, in our metropolis. The cauſe is in general the neglect of nature for the aids of art, proceeding from a degree of fondneſs which ſtimulates the parent to take all the

care upon herſelf, and to leave little to the inviſible proceſs of natural energies.

If the child ſurvive by the vigour of its conſtitution to a puerile age, even then the fondneſs of the parent, moſt amiable in its origin, but moſt injurious to the object it moſt wiſhes to benefit, is found to deſtroy the very purpoſes of living, by endeavouring to render life pleaſurable to exceſs and without viciſſitude. If his abſence can be ſo far borne as to permit him to enter at a ſchool, an earneſt deſire is expreſſed that he may be indulged in all thoſe luxuries of the table which pollute the pure ſtream of the infant blood, and, by overloading the organs of intellect, preclude the poſſibility of ſolid improvement. He, whoſe attention ſhould be engroſſed by his book, and who ſhould learn to look on every pleaſure of the ſenſes as a ſubordinate pleaſure, is taught, by the overweening attachment of a parent, to have little other care than to pamper the groſſeſt among the animal appetites.

Regularity of diet, and modeſt decency in all the circumſtances of ſcholaſtic life, are often repreſented as the reſult of ſparing œconomy; and the young pupil no ſooner returns, in the days of vacation, to his paternal roof, than he is crammed with delicacies, to compenſate the penance he has undergone at the place of his education.

We can derive but little improvement from the teacher we contemn. Yet how can the boy avoid contempt for the maſter, whom he is taught to conſider as totally regardleſs of any thing but his own ſordid intereſt, and capable of depriving the child committed to his care of his proper ſuſtenance? But they who are ſenſible in other reſpects, are rendered, by their fondneſs, weak enough to believe any calumny which a froward child utters for the ſake of changing his place of education, or of remaining at home.

The propenſity to indulgence is ſo ſtrong, that at the matureſt age, and with the moſt improved reaſon, it is difficult to reſtrain it within the limits of moderation. To encourage, inſtead of checking this natural tendency, is, in effect, to nurſe thoſe vices of the future youth, and to cauſe thoſe exceſſes of early manhood,

manhood, which in the end haſten the grey hairs of the inconſiderate parent with ſorrow to the grave. Few would be profligate in the extreme, if they were not untaught all the virtue they learn under their tutors, by the example and inadvertence of their own family. When immorality is obliquely recommended by a father's practice, the infection is irreſiſtible. A tutor's admonitions are ſoon ſuppoſed to proceed merely from official care, when they contradict the conduct of him whom a child naturally loves above all others.

The general cuſtom of allowing a conſiderable weekly ſtipend, and of giving pecuniary preſents to the ſchoolboy, often fruſtrates the intentions of education. It is not likely that he ſhould give his thoughts to literary improvement, who is obliged to ſtudy how he ſhall ſpend the bounty of his aunts and couſins; and whoſe pocket always enables him to find recreation without ſeeking it in books. It would be happy if things could be ſo contrived, that, for want of employment he ſhould be driven to thoſe volumes where employment of the ſweeteſt kind may be always found, attended with the moſt valuable advantages. A profuſion of money at a childiſh age is not uncommonly the cauſe of ſubſequent extravagance, and tends to introduce one of the moſt pernicious and leaſt curable vices, a propenſity to gaming. But reaſoning can avail little againſt the partiality of ſome fond relation who cannot ſuffer preſent pleaſure to be neglected by her favourite for the ſake of an advantage diſtant and uncertain.

It is uſually ſuppoſed that maternal affection is ſtronger than paternal. There is no doubt but that it often interpoſes in adjuſting the plan of education. Its kind ſolicitude is too amiable to be cenſured with aſperity. Yet we muſt aſſert, that it is not poſſible that a mother, though ſenſible and accompliſhed, ſhould be ſo well qualified to direct the care of a boy's education in all its parts, as a father of equal abilities. All the important departments in civil life are filled by men. The pulpit, the bar, the ſenate-houſe are appropriated to men. Men, from the facility with which they travel, and their ſuperior hardineſs, ſee

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more of the world than women, who, with the same opportunities, might indeed make the same observations; but who, in the present state of things, cannot judge of those qualifications, attainments, manners, and characters, which recommend to notice in all the professions of life, and tend to insure success. Hence it is that they are observed to set the highest value on ornamental accomplishments, of the grace of which their fine taste is peculiarly sensible; and to under-rate the more solid attainments, with the utility and beauty of which their situation often keeps them unacquainted. Many a fond and sensible mother has controverted the necessity of learning Latin, as a *dead* language, in which there can be no use, while the living languages of France and Italy are more easily attainable, and infinitely more fashionable. Such a judgment is not to be wondered at; nor does it proceed from natural weakness, but from an unavoidable unacquaintance with the charms of the classics, and the utility of Latin in the practice of every liberal art, in the conversation of the enlightened, and in the study of the most admired modern books, which abound in Latin quotations, in allusions to the classics, and in words which cannot be fully understood without understanding the language from which they are derived.

Add to this, that the extreme tenderness of maternal affection will not permit that strict discipline to be exercised on a beloved son, which, though it has nothing in it of harsh severity, resembles not the soft and indulgent treatment of the domestic nursery. Scarcely any thing of value is brought to perfection without some care analagous to this scholastic discipline. The tree will not produce its fruits in sufficient abundance, or with a proper flavour, unless it is chastised in its luxuriances by the hand of art. It is requisite that the stubborn soil should be broken by cultivation. The most serviceable animals are either useless or hurtful, till reduced to obedience by coercion. Man, above all, possessed as he is of stronger powers and accurate perceptions, of ill qualities no less than good, in a superior degree, requires all the aids of art to correct his enormities, and teach him to act a rational and consistent

ſiſtent part in the theatre of the world. Although the infliction of ſalutary diſcipline may give pain even to thoſe who know it to be ſalutary, yet they muſt not, for the ſake of ſparing their own feelings, act in contradiction to their judgment, and do an irreparable injury to thoſe whom they moſt tenderly love. Exceſſive lenity and indulgence is ultimately exceſſive rigour.

With the excellent effects of Spartan diſcipline, every one is acquainted. Of the lamentable conſequences of modern relaxation, daily experience furniſhes examples. The puerile age is patient and tractable. Reformation muſt begin there. Temperance, diligence, modeſty, and humility, cannot be too early inculcated. Theſe will lead through the temple of virtue to the temple of honour and happineſs. In this progreſs, ſtrict diſcipline will ſometimes be neceſſary; but let not the pretence of proper correction give an opportunity for the gratification of vindictive cruelty. Inhumanity, even in a Buſby, admits not of palliation.

No. CXLIV. ON THE POEMS ATTRIBUTED TO ROWLEY.

THERE are many truths which we firmly believe, though we are unable to refute every argument which the extreme ſubtilty of refined learning may advance to invalidate them. When I read the reſearches of thoſe learned antiquaries who have endeavoured to prove, that the poems attributed to Rowley were really written by him, I obſerve many ingenious remarks in confirmation of their opinion, which it would be tedious, if not difficult, to controvert. But I no ſooner turn to the poems, than the labours of the antiquaries appear only a waſte of time and ingenuity, and I am involuntarily forced to join in placing that laurel, which he ſeems ſo well to have deſerved, on the brow of Chatterton.

The poems bear ſo many marks of ſuperior genius, that they have deſervedly excited the general attention of polite

polite ſcholars, and are conſidered as the moſt remarkable productions in modern poetry. We have many inſtances of poetical eminence at an early age; but neither Cowley, Milton, nor Pope, ever produced any thing, while they were boys, which can juſtly be compared to the poems of Chatterton. The learned antiquaries do not indeed diſpute their excellence. They extol it in the higheſt terms of applauſe. They raiſe their favourite Rowley to a rivalry with Homer; but they make the very merit of the works an argument againſt the real author, Is it poſſible, ſay they, that a boy could produce compoſitions ſo beautiful and ſo maſterly? That a common boy ſhould produce them is not poſſible; but that they ſhould be produced by a boy of an extraordinary genius, ſuch a genius as is that of Homer and Shakeſpeare; ſuch a genius as appears not above once in many centuries; though a prodigy, is ſuch an one as by no means exceeds the bounds of rational credibility.

That Chatterton was ſuch a genius, his manners and his life in ſome degree evince. He had all the tremulous ſenſibility of genius, all its excentricities, all its pride, and all its ſpirit. Even his death, unfortunate and wicked as it was, diſplayed a magnitude of ſoul, which urged him to ſpurn a world, where even his exalted genius could not vindicate him from contempt, indigence, and contumely.

Againſt the opinion of his ſuperiority of genius, the miſcellanies which he publiſhed in a periodical pamphlet are triumphantly produced. But what proof is there that all which are attributed to him were really his own? They are collected after his death; collected, I ſuppoſe, by conjecture, and publiſhed in a ſeparate volume with all the typographical errata of the haſty pamphlets from which they are reprinted. But in many of the pieces which were confeſſedly written by him, there are marks of genius, not indeed equal to thoſe of the counterfeit Rowley, but ſuch as prove, that the boy who wrote them could write better. In compoſing the ancient poems all his attention had been exerted. It was the firſt, and ſeems to have been the greateſt, object of his life, to raiſe himſelf to future eminence by the inſtrumentality

inſtrumentality of a fictitious poet of a former age. Nights, if not days, were devoted to the work; for we have it on record, that he uſed to ſit awake in his chamber during the ſilence of midnight. But the little compoſitions which he wrote for the magazines, were either written in a careleſs mood, when he relaxed his mind from his grand work, or in a moment of diſtreſs, when an extemporary eſſay or copy of verſes was neceſſary to procure him a halfpenny roll and a draught of ſmall beer. When he found that the editors were more deſirous of quantity than quality, and amidſt the numerous volunteers in their ſervice, ſeemed backward to engage with one who wanted a ſtipend, he foreſaw that even the little which nature wanted would not be ſupplied—He ſaw, and reſigned his indignant ſpirit.

Unfortunate boy! ſhort and evil were thy days, but thy fame ſhall be immortal. Hadſt thou been known to the munificent patrons of genius—But waſt thou not known to one? If fame report thy treatment truly, it was not kind of thee, Horatio; it was not like thyſelf, for thou art gentle in thy nature. Waſt thou not conſidered as the oracle of taſte, the inveſtigator of all that is curious in arts and literature?—It was then, at laſt, thy only pride and pleaſure to bring to light a catalogue of *royal and noble* authors.—What hadſt thou to do with reptiles? with a poor, friendleſs, and obſcure charity-boy? Beſides, exclaims Horatio, it was a forgery,—a horrid, a vile forgery—Impoſtors are not to be encouraged.—But let us aſk thee, didſt not thou put a falſe name to thy own romance,—to thy own poor production, for ſuch it is when compared with the ſublime excellence of Chatterton? If, indeed, thy neglect of the poor boy aroſe from miſtake or inadvertency, and I think it might, the generous Public freely forgives thee;—but if from pride and inſolence, the preſent and all future times will probably reſent an omiſſion, which haſtened one of the greateſt geniuſes which England ever knew, at the age of a boy, to that bourne from which no traveller returns.

Unfortunate boy! poorly waſt thou accommodated during thy ſhort ſojourning among us;—rudely waſt thou treated,—ſorely did thy feeling ſoul ſuffer from the ſcorn of the unworthy; and there are, at laſt, thoſe

who wish to rob thee of thy only meed, thy posthumous glory. Severe too are the censures of thy morals. In the gloomy moments of despondency, I fear thou hast uttered impious and blasphemous thoughts, which none can defend, and which neither thy youth, nor thy fiery spirit, nor thy situation can extenuate. But let thy more rigid censors reflect, that thou wast literally and strictly but a boy. Let many of thy bittereſt enemies reflect what were their own religious principles and whether they had any, at the age of fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen. Surely it is a severe and an unjust surmise, that thou wouldest probably have ended thy life as a victim of the laws, if thou hadst not finished it as thou didst; since the very act by which thou durst put an end to thy painful existence, proves, that thou thoughteſt it better to die, than to support life by theft or violence. The speculative errors of a boy who wrote from the sudden suggestions of passion or despondency, who is not convicted of any immoral or dishoneſt act in consequence of his speculations, ought to be excused and consigned to oblivion. But there seems to be a general and inveterate dislike to the boy, exclusively of the poet; a dislike which many will be ready to impute, and, indeed, not without the appearance of reason, to that insolence and envy of the little great, which cannot bear, to acknowledge so transcendent and commanding a superiority in the humble child of penury and obscurity.

Malice, if there was any, may surely now be at reſt; for "Cold he lies in the grave below." But where were ye, O ye friends to genius, when stung with disappointment, distreſſed for food and raiment, with every frightful form of human misery painted on his fine imagination, poor Chatterton sunk in despair? Alas! ye knew him not then, and now it is too late,——

For now he is dead;
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow tree.

So sang the sweet youth, in as tender an elegy as ever flowed from a feeling heart.

In return for the pleasure I have received from thy poems, I pay thee, poor boy, the trifling tribute of my

my praise. Thyself thou hast emblazoned; thine own monument thou hast erected. But they whom thou hast delighted feel a pleasure in vindicating thine honours from the rude attacks of detraction. Thy sentiments, thy verse, thy rhythm all are modern, all are thine. By the help of glossaries and dictionaries, and the perusal of many old English writers, thou hast been able to translate the language of the present time into that of former centuries. Thou hast built an artificial ruin. The stones are mossy and old, the whole fabric appears really antique to the distant and the careless spectator; even the connoisseur, who pores with spectacles on the single stones, and inspects the mossy concretions with an antiquarian eye, boldly authenticates its antiquity; but they who examine without prejudice, and by the criterion of common sense, clearly discover the cement and the workmanship of a modern mason.

But though I cannot entertain a doubt but that the poems were written by Chatterton, yet I mean not to dictate to others, nor will I engage in controversy. I have expressed my feelings as those of a reader, who, though he respects the study of antiquities, dislikes the blind prejudices of the mere antiquary. I leave the weapons of controversy to be wielded by those powerful champions in the cause of Chatterton, a Tyrwhit and a Warton. I give a single vote for Chatterton; but I can make no interest in his favour.

No. CXLV. ON THE MORAL TENDENCY OF THE WRITINGS OF STERNE.

IT is the privilege of genius, like the sun, to gild every object on which it emits its lustre. If the influence of its light and heat be directed on deformity itself, something of an agreeable tinge is communicated; and that which naturally excites horror and aversion, begins at last to please. Genius, like the fabulous power of a Midas, seems to convert all it touches into gold, and with the wonderful property of the philosophers stone, to transmute the basest to the purest metal.

metal. Hence it has happened, that doctrines which common ſenſe and common prudence have repudiated, are no ſooner recommended by writers of genius, than they are received without debate, and admired as the ultimate diſcoveries of improved philoſophy. Let the ſame opinions be advanced by a dull writer, and even the vain and the vicious, whom they tend to encourage, will refute and diſavow them from principles of pride and of ſhame.

That Sterne poſſeſſed a fine particle of real genius, if our reaſon were diſpoſed to deny it, our ſenſations on peruſing him will fully evince. It is, I think, an infallible proof of real genius, when a writer poſſeſſes the power of ſhaking the nerves, or of affecting the mind in the moſt lively manner in a few words, and with the moſt perfect ſimplicity of language. Such a power conſpicuouſly marks both a Shakeſpeare and a Sterne; though Sterne is far below Shakeſpeare in the ſcale of genius.

I am ready to allow to Sterne another and a moſt exalted merit beſides, and above the praiſe of genius. There never was a Heathen philoſopher of any age or nation, who has recommended, in ſo affecting a manner, the benignant doctrines of a general philanthropy. He has corrected the acrimony of the heart, ſmoothed the aſperities of natural tempers, and taught the milk of human kindneſs to flow all-cheerily (it is his own expreſſion) in gentle and uninterrupted channels.

To have effected ſo amiable a purpoſe is a great praiſe, a diſtinguiſhed honour. I lament that the praiſe is leſſened and the honour ſullied by many faults and many follies, which render the writings of Sterne juſtly and greatly reprehenſible.

If we conſider them as compoſitions, and are guided in our judgment by the dictates of ſound criticiſm, and by thoſe ſtandards of excellence, the rectitude of which has been decided by the teſtimony of the politeſt ages, it will be neceſſary to pronounce on them a ſevere ſentence. The great critic of antiquity required, as the neceſſary conſtituents of a legitimate compoſition, a beginning, a middle, and an end. I believe it will be difficult to find them in the chaotic confuſion of Triſtram Shandy. But, diſregarding the tribunal of Ariſtotle,

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to which the modern pretenders to genius do not conſider themſelves as amenable, it will ſtill be true even by the deciſions of reaſon and common ſenſe, that his writings abound with faults.

Obſcurity has always been deemed one of the greateſt errors of which a writer can be guilty; and there have been few readers, except thoſe who thought that the acknowledgment would derogate from their reputation for wiſdom, who have not complained that Triſtram Shandy is in many places diſguſtfully obſcure.

The admirers of Sterne extol his wit. But I believe it will be found that his wit is of the loweſt kind, and the eaſieſt of invention; for is it not for the moſt part alluſive obſcenity? a ſpecies of wit to be found in its fulleſt perfection in the vulgareſt and vileſt haunts of vice? It is indeed, eaſy to attract the notice and the admiration of the youthful and the wanton by exhibiting looſe images under a tranſparent veil. It is true indeed there is uſually a veil, and the decent are therefore tempted to read; but the veil, like the affected modeſty of a courtezan, ſerves only as an artifice to facilitate corruption.

The praiſe of humour has been laviſhed on him with peculiar bounty. If quaintneſs is humour, the praiſe is all his own, and let Cervantes and Fielding bow their heads to Sterne. They who admire Uncle Toby, Doctor Slop, and Corporal Trim, as natural characters, or as exhibiting true humour in their manners and converſations, are little acquainted with nature, and have no juſt taſte for genuine humour. It is evident enough that the author meant to be humorous and witty, and many of his readers, in the abundance of their good nature, have taken the will for the deed.

But till obſcurity, till obſcenity, till quaintneſs, till impudence, till oddity, and mere wantonneſs, wildneſs, and extravagance, are perfections in writing, Triſtram Shandy cannot juſtly claim the rank to which it has been raiſed by folly and faſhion, by caprice, libertiniſm, and ignorance. I know that this cenſure will be conſidered as blaſphemy by the idolaters of Sterne; but I hope it will not ſour that milk of human kindneſs which they may have imbibed from his writings; and

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to an exceſſive degree of which many ſoft and effeminate perſons affectedly pretend. Let their philanthropy repreſs awhile their reſentment, and I will venture to predict, that time will inſenſibly ſtrip the writer of thoſe honours which never belonged to him.

But will you allow his ſermons no merit? I allow ſome of them the merit of the pathetic; but the laborious attempts to be witty and humorous have ſpoiled the greater part of them. The appearance of ſincerity is one of the beſt beauties of a ſermon. But Sterne ſeems as if he were laughing at his audience, as if he had aſcended the pulpit in a frolick, and preached in mockery. Had he however written nothing but his ſermons, he would not have been cenſured as the deſtroyer of the morals and the happineſs of private life.

There are, indeed, exquiſite touches of the pathetic interſperſed throughout all his works. His pathetic ſtories are greatly admired. The pathetic was the chief excellence of his writings; his admirers will be diſpleaſed if one were to add, that it is the only one which admits of unalloyed applauſe. It is certainly this which chiefly adorns the Sentimental Journey; a work which, whatever are its merits, has had a pernicious influence on the virtue, and conſequently on the happineſs of public and private ſociety.

That ſoftneſs, that affected and exceſſive ſympathy at firſt ſight, that ſentimental affection, which is but *luſt, in diſguiſe*, and which is ſo ſtrongly inſpired by the Sentimental Journey, and by Triſtram Shandy have been the ruin of thouſands of our countrymen and countrywomen, who fancied, that while they were breaking the laws of God and man, they were actuated by the fine feelings of *ſentimental affection*. How much are divorces multiplied ſince Sterne appeared!

Sterne himſelf, with all his pretenſions, is ſaid to have diſplayed, in private life, a bad and a hard heart; and I ſhall not heſitate to pronounce him, though many admire him as the firſt of philoſophers, the grand promoter of adultery, and every ſpecies of illicit commerce.

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No. CXLVI. ON THE WEIGHT AND EFFICACY WHICH MORALITY MAY DERIVE FROM THE INFLUENCE AND EXAMPLE OF THOSE WHO ARE CALLED THE GREAT.

IT is true, indeed, that the world abounds with moral inſtruction, and that there is ſcarcely any good thing ſo eaſily obtained as good advice; but it is no leſs true, that moral inſtruction and good advice are found to poſſeſs a very ſmall degree of influence in the buſy walks of active life. In the church, we hear the ſcriptures read and ſermons preached; in the library, we ſtudy and admire the morality of the philoſophers; but how few, in the actual purſuits of ambition, of intereſt, of pleaſure, and even in the common occupations and intercourſe of ordinary life, ſuffer their conduct to be regulated by the precept of a Solomon, of a Socrates, or of him who was greater than either!

No ſentence is triter, than that all example is more powerful than precept; but when the example is ſet by the rich and the great, its influence on the herd of mankind becomes irreſiſtible. What can books effect? what avail the gentle admonitions of the retired moraliſt, againſt the examples of lords, dukes, and Eaſt India Nabobs? Can the ſtill ſmall voice of conſcience be heard by thoſe who live in the noiſe and tumult of pleaſurable purſuits? or can the mild doctrines of the humble Jeſus be attended to, amid the agitations of the gaming-table, and the debaucheries of a brothel? A vicious nobleman, or profligate man of faſhion, contributes more to extirpate morality, and diminiſh the little portion of happineſs which is allowed to mankind, than all the malignant writings of the ſceptics, from Mandeville and Bolingbroke, down to the feeble and cowardly, yet conceited writer, who inſinuates his corrupt and infidel opinions under the fair ſemblance of an elegant hiſtory. I cannot help obſerving, when I think

think of that laſt and recent attempt, that it reſembles that of the evil ſpirit, who, when he beguiled the mother of mankind, and ruined all her progeny, uſed the ſoft words of an affected eloquence. The ſerpent was however curſed; but the wily hiſtorian is invited to a court, rewarded with places of honour and advantage, and eagerly enrolled in the legiſlative body of a mighty and a chriſtian nation.

It is certainly true, that when a government beſtows peculiar honour on men who have written againſt the religion of the country, and who have impiouſly fought againſt the King of kings, it muſt loſe the reſpect and attachment of all good men. The religion of a country is unqueſtionably worthy of more ſolicitude in its preſervation than the political conſtitution, however excellent and admirable. Kings, with all their minions and prerogatives, lawgivers and laws, are trifles compared to that ſyſtem of religion, on which depends the temporal and eternal welfare of every individual throughout the empire. What avails it, that under a ſucceſsful adminiſtration the French are beaten, and the Americans ſcourged for the ſin of rebellion, if the ſame adminiſtration ruins our beſt, our ſweeteſt hopes; thoſe which rely on the protection of a kind Providence, and thoſe which cheer us in this vale of miſery, by the bright gleams of a ſun which ſhall riſe to ſet no more?

But ſuppoſing the narrow-minded miniſters of a government ſo involved in gaming, ſenſuality, and temporal concerns, as to view all religion as impoſture, and all modes of faith as political contrivances; yet ſurely they act inconſiſtently with the dictates of their own mean and low ſpecies of wiſdom, when they extirpate, by their example, that religion which they allow to be politically uſeful. What ideas can the multitude entertain of the truth or advantages of a religion, when they ſee thoſe who openly deride, and profeſs to diſbelieve it, poſſeſſing the greateſt power of the ſtate, appointing biſhops, and archbiſhops, and ſigning, while they ſit at the table with a ſtrumpet, preſentations to the cure of half the ſouls in the three kingdoms? Who, unleſs he is corrupted by theſe inſtances, but

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muſt feel an honeſt indignation, if a man were raiſed to the chancellorſhip of England, in whoſe diſpoſal are ſo many eccleſiaſtical preferments, were a bully in his profeſſion, and in private life a whoremaſter? Who can wonder that a thouſand little imitators of him ſhould think it a mark of ſpirit, wiſdom and abilities, to follow his ſteps in the paths of vice, and, if poſſible, to exceed his enormities? What muſt the common people think when profligate men are advanced to the head of a profeſſion? They cannot but believe, that thoſe who are reputed to be ſo much wiſer than themſelves, and who are evidently greater, in a worldly ſenſe of the epithet, muſt have choſen that ſyſtem of opinions, and that plan of conduct which are moſt likely to be juſt and rational, ſafe and pleaſant. "If my Lord, or his Grace," ſays the mechanic, "of whoſe wiſdom liſtening ſenates "ſtand in awe, is a debauchee and an infidel, I muſt "conclude, that my pariſh preacher, an obſcure "and homely man, is a hypocrite, religion a farce, "morality a uſeleſs reſtraint on the liberty of nature. "Welcome then, univerſal libertiniſm! and let us "haſten to the houſe of the harlot; let us drink the "ſweet cup of intoxication; let us ſcorn the creeping "manners of vulgar induſtry, and, like men of ſpirit, "ſeek our fortune with a piſtol on the highway."

We will ſuppoſe the caſe of a great officer of ſtate, but of an abandoned character, reſiding at a great houſe in a populous ſtreet of the metropolis. His conſpicuous ſtation draws the eyes of all the neighbours on every part of his private as well as his public conduct. His neighbours, we will proceed to ſuppoſe, are honeſt men, bred, in what he calls the prejudices, but which they really believed the virtues, of their forefathers. They are faithful huſbands, they are conſtant churchmen. They are temperate and œconomical. They are induſtrious in their occupations, and juſt in the payment of their debts. But the great man produces on them a total metamorphoſis. He lives in a ſtate of faſhionable ſeparation from his wife, whom he treated cruelly and wickedly. He keeps a miſtreſs. His houſe is a conſtant ſcene of intemperate feſtivity. His Sundays are, in a peculiar manner, devoted to jollity, gaming,

gaming, and debauchery. He would as ſoon think of going to heaven as to the church; and as to paying debts, it is quite unfaſhionable, and he has genteeler methods of expending his money than on the low tradeſmen who ſupply him with nothing elſe but neceſſaries. Who, that has any pretenſions to faſhion, could bear to neglect a horſe-race and the gaming-table, merely to ſatisfy the greaſy inhabitants of Clare-market? Such is ſometimes the example of the great neighbour.

Now I aſk, whether the reſtraints of a common education or of common principles, whether the maxims of books or the admonitions of preachers, can counterbalance the weight of ſuch an example, rendered brilliant by riches and grandeur, and ſtill farther recommended by the patronage of a king, and the authority of office? Vice and miſery are communicated from him, firſt to his neighbourhood, and then to the public at large, like infectious and fatal diſeaſes from the foul contagion of a putrid carcaſe.

But if a king, a court, a miniſtry, a parliament, were to honour and reward thoſe only, or chiefly, whoſe characters were unimpeached, and to brand with infamy, or at leaſt to neglect, the abandoned libertine and the audacious blaſphemer, however celebrated for eloquence and abilities, then would the empire be fixed on a baſis of adamant; then would faction and rebellion be no more; and the rulers of this world would deſerve to be honoured with a title to which they have uſually but little claim, that of the Repreſentatives of the Beneficent and Almighty Lord of all Creation.

No. CXLVII. ON THE PROFLIGACY AND CONSEQUENT MISERY OF THE LOWER CLASSES, AND ON THE MEANS OF PREVENTION.

A Contemplative and benevolent man can ſcarcely look down for a moment on the lower walks of life without feeling his compaſſion powerfully excited. On whatever ſide he turns, he beholds human nature ſadly degraded, and ſinking into the moſt deplorable wretchedneſs, in proportion as it recedes from its natural and its attainable perfection. Ye philoſophers, who exert your ingenuity to explode, as unneceſſary, the little virtue and religion that remain among us, leave your cloſets awhile, and ſurvey mankind as they are found in the purlieus of a great metropolis, in the haunts of Old Drury, of St. Giles's, of Duke's Place, of Hockley in the Hole, of the brothel, of the priſon-houſe, and then ſay whether your hearts do not ſmite you on the recollection, that you have exerciſed thoſe talents which God Almighty gave you for benignant purpoſes, in breaking down the fences of morality! Let him who coolly controverts the diſtinction between moral good and evil, and who, inſtigated by vice and vanity, boldly fights againſt the religion of Jeſus, and the comfortable doctrines of grace and redemption, repair to the cells of the convict, to the condemned hole, and ſpend the midnight hour with the murderer who is doomed to fall a victim on the morrow to the juſtice of his country. Ah! little think the conceited ſophiſts who ſit calmly at their deſks, and teach men to laugh at all that is ſerious and ſacred, to what an abyſs of miſery the actual practice of their ſpeculative opinions will reduce the poor loſt child of fallen Adam! If they thought on this, and poſſeſſed hearts capable of feeling, they would ſhudder at the tendency of their writings, and henceforth employ their abilities in reſtoring human nature to happineſs and dignity.

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The evils arising from the poverty of the lower ranks are trifling, when compared with those occasioned by their depravity. There is, indeed, no real and substantial happiness of which poverty, when accompanied with health and innocence, is not capable; but wallowing in vice, involved in the perplexities of fraud, haunted by the fears of detection, and distressed and tormented with the diseases of intemperance, it becomes such a state of wretchedness and wickedness as can only be exceeded in the regions of infernal torture. And can the rulers of this world possess a plenitude of power without attempting to exert it in its fullest force in the prevention, or at least the mitigation, of extreme misery among the lowest, the most numerous, and perhaps the most useful members of the community? I have no esteem for that species of politics which pretends to pursue a national good independently of the happiness of individuals; and I cannot help thinking, a system of government which derives any part of its wealth from the wretchedness of the greater part of its subjects, not only defective but diabolical. To encourage intoxication for the sake of encreasing a revenue, though it may be natural in a confederacy of sharpers, is an idea so mean, so base, so cruel, that the statesman who entertains it, however loaded with civil honours, and renowned for his wisdom, deserves to be stigmatized with immortal infamy. That the vices and the miseries of the lower classes chiefly arise from the multiplication of houses of public entertainment, is a truth which none have ever controverted. And perhaps no effectual and permanent remedy can be applied, without the interposition of the legislature, in lessening the number of public houses, and in exacting a strict scrutiny into the characters of those to whom licences are allowed.

But in the present constitution of affairs, it is greatly to be feared, that the desire of raising a large revenue will usually supersede all moral considerations. What, indeed is the moralist to the financier? The greatness of empire, like that of private life, is for the most part estimated by riches, exclusively of private virtue and of intellectual excellence. If then we vainly appeal

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to the legiſlature, we muſt ſeek, in other reſources, for the alleviation of a diſeaſe which perhaps the legiſlature alone can radically cure.

Now it is certain, that much of the profligacy of the plebeian order ariſes from extreme ignorance. All men purſue with ardour the poſſeſſion of ſome good, real or imaginary. What is it which muſt conſtitute this *good*, and appear ſuperior to all other objects, in the mind of a wretch born in a cellar or a garret of Kent-ſtreet, or Broad St. Giles's, almoſt ſtarved with cold and hunger during his infancy, beaten, reviled, abuſed, neglected while a boy, and conducted to manhood amidſt the moſt ſhocking examples of cruelty and fraud, of drunkenneſs and debauchery? Is it probable that, for the moſt part, he ſhould have an idea of any other good but the poſſeſſion of money, and the indulgence of the groſſeſt ſenſuality? Can he have any principles or habits of virtue to reſtrain him from ſecret fraud and open violence? His underſtanding is no leſs rude and uncultivated than that of the ſavage, and becomes at laſt incapable of admitting any inſtruction but in the low tricks of a thief, and the artifices of a proſtitute. The world exiſts not to him, but as it appears amidſt the vileſt, the moſt degenerate, and the moſt ignorant of the human race. He purſues a *ſummum bonum*, or a chief good, which appears to him to conſiſt in ſeizing the property of the incautious, and in uſing his gains as the inſtrument of indulgence in brutal exceſs. Poor unfortunate brother! for a brother we muſt acknowledge thee, deformed as thou art with rags, and loathſome to the eye of delicacy.—Hapleſs boy! if thou hadſt known purer pleaſures and better objects, thou wouldeſt probably have ſought them with the ſame eagerneſs which has brought thee to the gibbet. The dignified ſtateſman, the venerable biſhop, the authoritative judge who tries and who condemns thee to die, might probably have done as thou haſt, and ſuffered as thou ſuffereſt, had he been born as thou waſt born, the child of miſery, the out-caſt of ſociety; friendleſs, homeleſs, unbeloved, unregarded, unknown, and unknowing of the means and motives of an honeſt induſtry. Thou falleſt a victim to the laws indeed, and perhaps

perhaps a juſt victim; but I will pity thee, my heart ſhall bleed for thee, and ventures to predict that the ſweet mercy of Heaven will mitigate the ſeverity of human juſtice.

He who can enjoy the pleaſures of affluence without conſidering the miſery of the lower claſſes, and endeavouring, according to his influence and abilities, to alleviate the burthen, probably poſſeſſes a diſpoſition which no riches can render happy. Charity is characteriſtic of this country, and is, indeed, the natural effect of Britiſh generoſity. Our clergy are conſtantly recommending it in the metropolis; and the many palaces of the poor which lift up their roofs around it, are eminent and honourable teſtimonies, that their preaching is not in vain when they recommend munificence. There are, however, few charitable eſtabliſhments that ſo immediately tend to ſnatch the loweſt claſſes from wretchedneſs and ruin as that of the Marine Society; and if my praiſe could contribute to effect it, the fame of its inſtitutors ſhould be immortal. But their own benevolent hearts, and that God, in whoſe gracious purpoſes they co-operate, are able to beſtow on them a reward infinitely ſuperior to all human glory.

They who inform the underſtandings of the poor, in ſuch a manner and degree as to amend their morals, contribute more to their happineſs than the moſt munificent among their pecuniary benefactors. In a great and commercial nation honeſt induſtry will ſeldom be deſtitute of employment and reward. And here I cannot help remarking the ſingular utility and importance of the clergy. The church-doors are open to all; and valuable inſtruction in every duty of human life is afforded gratuitouſly. Our Saviour, who knew and felt for the wretchedneſs of the lower claſſes, ſeems to have deſigned the goſpel, in a peculiar manner, for the poor; and the poor of this country have the goſpel preached to them, if they are willing to liſten to it, in every part of the kingdom. But it is a melancholy truth, that the poor in general, but eſpecially thoſe of the metropolis, neglect to avail themſelves of this ſingular and unſpeakable advantage. Thoſe among them

them who give any attention to religion, are often led to a ſtate approaching to lunacy, by illiterate and fanatical pretenders to heavenly illumination.

I venture to affirm then, that more weight and authority ſhould be given to the regular clergy, whether diſſenters or on the eſtabliſhment. I mean not to erect a ſpiritual tyranny, for I abhor all tyranny; but I wiſh that ſome mode ſhould be deviſed for rendering the regular clergy more reſpectable than they now are in the eyes of the vulgar. And I ſhould imagine the moſt effectual method of accompliſhing this purpoſe is, to reward thoſe who are eminently diſtinguiſhed for piety and for their parochial labours, with thoſe preferments, and with thoſe honours, which, in the eye of reaſon and of God, are juſtly their due. In the preſent ſtate of things, the worthy curate, who ſpends all his days in preaching, praying, and in viſiting the ſick, ſhall earn leſs, and be leſs reſpected than a ſmith and a carpenter; and at his death leave his widow and his children to the cold protection of charity. But a young rake, who happens to be couſin to a lord or a biſhop, or to be connected with thoſe who have influence at an election, ſhall get himſelf *blacked over, or japanned*, as he vulgarly phraſes it, at an ordination, and thenceforward be preferred to pluralities, and ſhine, as a ſenſible author obſerves, in all public places but his own pulpits.

But, after all that the clergy can do, even when abuſes are removed, it is to be feared that the lower claſſes will be led by the examples of the higher. But oh! ye who call yourſelves the great, condeſcend once in your lives to viſit a goal, and to ſurvey the manſions of woe and wickedneſs in the out-ſkirts of the town! I apply not to your purſes; you are liberal in ſubſcribing to all kinds of charitable inſtitutions. Ye do well. But give me leave to tell you, that the ſetting of a good example to the lower claſſes, conſidered merely as an act of charity, will do more good, and prevent more miſery, than if ye cut down your laſt oak, or give all ye win at the gaming-table to found an hoſpital or eſtabliſh a diſpenſary.

No.

No. CXLVIII. ON SOME PASSAGES IN ARISTOTLE'S RHETORIC, WITH MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS ON HIS STYLE, GENIUS, AND WORKS.

ARISTOTLE eſtabliſhed an intellectual empire, more glorious and univerſal than the conqueſts of his pupil. But he is a remarkable inſtance of the caprice of human judgment and the revolutions of taſte. After having been idolized with a veneration almoſt blaſphemous, he is now moſt undeſervedly neglected. And yet his works, though unentertaining and obſcure to the reader who peruſes them with the ſame attention which he gives to a novel and a newſpaper, abound with matter which cannot fail to enrich the mind, and to delight a philoſophical taſte by its beautiful truth and accuracy. In his three books on the rhetorical art, are many paſſages which deſcribe human nature in the moſt curious manner, and with the greateſt fidelity of delineation. He characterizes the manners of different ages no leſs ſcientifically, than a Hunter would deſcribe an anatomical ſubject, or a Linnæus a plant. The fine pictures of the manners of young and old men in the ſecond book, are ſuch as Horace has imitated, but not equalled; ſuch as might have richly fertilized the imagination of a Shakeſpear. The celebrated ſpeech of Jaques is not equal to the accurate and complete deſcriptions of the manners of different ages in the life of man by the neglected Ariſtotle.

The cloſe, yet comprehenſive language of Ariſtotle, will ſcarcely admit of a literal tranſlation. I ſhall not then attempt to deliver his ſentiments in Engliſh, ſince I ſhould not ſatisfy myſelf; but I will refer the young ſtudent to the admirable original, where, in the fourteenth, and a few ſubſequent chapters of the ſecond book, he will be able to acquire a very accurate knowledge of human nature.

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I have ſelected theſe paſſages as a ſpecimen of Ariſtotle, with an intention to obviate the prepoſſeſſions of thoſe who imagine, that every part of his works is abſtruſe and difficult of comprehenſion. A good tranſlation would be the beſt commentary that could be given of them: but he who was the beſt qualified to perform it in perfection is now no more. It is, indeed, much to be lamented, that the great philoſopher of Saliſbury did not condeſcend to enrich his country with a tranſlation of the beſt among the works of his admired Stagirite. Mr. Harris's ſtyle is, indeed, for the moſt part the ſtyle of Plato; but we may conclude from the many paſſages from Ariſtotle, which he has moſt accurately tranſlated in his notes, that he would have rendered whole treatiſes in Engliſh to the greateſt advantage. He has, however, cauſed the want of a tranſlation of Ariſtotle to be leſs felt, by ſupplying ſuch originals himſelf as certainly vie with his Grecian maſter.

I cannot help remarking, that though this is an age in which many ingenious authors delight in metaphyſical reſearches, yet few attend to the writings of Ariſtotle. Indeed, many of the French philoſophers, who have done all they can to obſcure the light of nature, common ſenſe, and revelation, by the clouds of metaphyſics, have not been ſufficiently acquainted with Greek, or with antient learning, to be able to improve themſelves by the fine philoſophy of the poliſhed ages of Greece and Rome. Like ſpiders in a dark and dirty corner, they have drawn flimſy cobwebs from themſelves, with which they cruelly endeavour to enſnare the giddy and unwary.

It is indeed my misfortune, if it be a misfortune, to have no great idea of the utility of metaphyſical diſquiſition. And though Ariſtotle's logic and metaphyſics principally contributed, in the middle ages, to render him the idol of the world, I cannot help conſidering them as the leaſt uſeful parts of his various lucubrations. They are, indeed, valuable curioſities, and illuſtrious monuments of human ingenuity; but at the ſame time, when compared to his rhetorical, ethical, and political books, they are as the huſk and the

ſhell to the pulp and the kernel. It was theſe, however, together with his erroneous phyſics, which induced the bigoted theologiſts to number Ariſtotle among the ſaints in the calendar, and to publiſh a hiſtory of his life and death; which concluded with aſſerting, that Ariſtotle was the forerunner of Chriſt in philoſophy, as John the Baptiſt had been in Grace. Images of him and of the founder of chriſtianity, were beheld at one time with equal veneration. It is ſaid, that ſome ſects taught their diſciples the categories inſtead of the catechiſm, and read in the church a ſection of the ethics inſtead of a chapter in the goſpel.

If the exclamation which he is related to have made at his death be true, he appears to have poſſeſſed very rational ideas on the ſubject of religion.

A chriſtian might have ſaid, as it is reported he ſaid juſt before his diſſolution, "In ſin and ſhame was "I born, in ſorrow have I lived, in trouble I depart; "O! thou Cauſe of cauſes, have mercy upon me!" I found this anecdote of Ariſtotle in the Centuries of Camerarius, but I am not certain of its authenticity.

The ſtyle of Ariſtotle has been cenſured as harſh and inelegant; but it muſt be remembered, that few works, of which ſo much remains, are ſuppoſed to have ſuffered more from the careleſsneſs or preſumption of tranſcribers, and the injuries of long duration, than the works of the great legiſlator of taſte and philoſophy. We may fairly attribute any chaſms and roughneſſes in the ſtyle to ſome rude hand, or to accident. It is not credible that ſo accurate a writer ſhould have neglected thoſe graces of ſtyle which the nature of his ſubjects admitted. The ſtyle of his beſt works is truly pure and attic; and Quintilian, whoſe judgment ought to decide, expreſſes a doubt whether he ſhould pronounce him more illuſtrious for his knowledge, his copiouſneſs, his acumen, his variety, or the ſweetneſs of his elocution.

No. CXLIX. ON THE BEAUTY AND HAPPINESS OF AN OPEN BEHAVIOUR AND AN INGENUOUS DISPOSITION.

A Great part of mankind, if they cannot furniſh themſelves with the courage and generoſity of the lion, think themſelves equally happy, and much wiſer, with the pitiful cunning of the fox. Every word they ſpeak, however trivial the ſubject, is weighed before it is uttered. A diſguſtful ſilence is obſerved till ſomebody of authority has advanced an opinion, and then, with a civil leer, a doubtful and heſitating aſſent is given, ſuch as may not preclude the opportunity of a ſubſequent retraction. If the converſation turn only on the common topics, of the weather, the news, the play, the opera, they are no leſs reſerved in uttering their opinion, than if their lives and fortunes depended on the ſentiment they ſhould at laſt venture, with oracular dignity, to advance. Whatever may be their real idea on the ſubject, as truth is a trifle compared to the object of pleaſing thoſe with whom they converſe, they generally contrive gently to agree with you; unleſs it ſhould appear to them, on mature conſideration, that their opinion (if contingencies to the number of at leaſt ten thouſand ſhould take place) may, at the diſtance of half a century, involve them in ſome ſmall danger of giving a little offence, or of incurring a trifling embarraſſment. They wear a conſtant ſmile on their countenance, and are all goodneſs and benevolence, if you will believe their profeſſions: but beware; for their hearts are as dark as the abyſſes which conſtitute the abodes of the evil ſpirit. A man of this character *niger eſt*, as Horace ſays, and thou, who juſtly claimeſt the title of an honeſt Engliſhman, be upon thy guard when thine ill fortune introduces thee into his company.

Theſe crafty animals are even more reſerved, cautious, timid, and ſerpentine, in action than in converſation.

verſation. They lay the deepeſt ſchemes, and no conclave of cardinals, no combination of conſpirators, no confederacy of thieves, ever deliberated with more impenetrable ſecrecy. Connections are ſought with the moſt painful ſolicitude. No arts and no aſſiduities are neglected to obtain the favour of the great. Their hearts pant with the utmoſt anxiety to be introduced to a family of diſtinction and opulence, not only becauſe the connection gratifies their pride, but alſo becauſe, in the wonderful complications and viciſſitudes of human affairs, it may one day promote their intereſt. Alas! before that day arrives, their perpetual uneaſineſs has uſually put a period to their ambition, by terminating their exiſtence. But even if they gain their ends after a youth and a manhood conſumed in conſtant care and ſervitude, yet the pleaſure is not adequate to the pain, nor the advantage to the labour. Every one is ready to complain of the ſhortneſs of life; to ſpend, therefore, the greateſt part of it in perpetual fear, caution, ſuſpence, and ſolicitude, merely to accompliſh an object of worldly ambition or avarice; what is it but the proverbial folly of him who loſes a pound to ſave a penny? Give me, O ye powers! an ingenuous man would exclaim, give me health and liberty, with a competence, and I will compaſſionate the man of a timid and ſervile ſoul, who has at laſt crept on hands and knees, through thick and thin, into a ſtall, and ſeated his limbs, after they have been palſied with care, on the bench of judges or of biſhops.

Indeed, the perpetual agitation of ſpirits, the tormenting fears, and the ardent hopes, which alternately diſorder the boſom of the ſubtle and ſuſpicious worldling, are more than a counterbalance to all the riches and titular honours which ſucceſsful cunning can obtain. What avail croziers, coronets, fortunes, manſion-houſes, parks, and equipages, when the poor poſſeſſor of them has worn out his ſenſibility, ruined his nerves, loſt his eyes, and perhaps ſtained his honour, and wounded his conſcience, in the toilſome drudgery of the moſt abject ſervitude, from his youth up even to the hoary age of feebleneſs and decrepitude? When a man has a numerous offſpring, it may, indeed, be generous to ſacrifice his

his own eaſe and happineſs to their advancement. He may feel a virtuous pleaſure in his conduct, which may ſoothe him under every circumſtance of diſagreeable toil or painful ſubmiſſion. But it is obvious to obſerve, that the moſt artful of men and the greateſt ſlaves to intereſt and ambition, are frequently unmarried men; and that they were unmarried, becauſe their caution and timidity would never permit them to take a ſtep which could never be revoked. Themſelves, however unamiable, have been the only objects of their love; and the reſt of mankind have been made uſe of merely as the inſtruments of their mean purpoſes and ſelfiſh gratifications. But the reſt of mankind need not envy them, for they inflict on themſelves the puniſhments they deſerve. They are always craving and never ſatisfied; they ſuffer a torment which is juſtly repreſented as infernal; that of being perpetually reaching after bleſſings which they can never graſp, of being prohibited to taſte the fruit whoſe colour appears ſo charming to the eye, and whoſe flavour ſo delicious to the imagination.

How lovely and how happy, on the other hand, an open and ingenuous behaviour! An honeſt, unſuſpicious heart, diffuſes a ſerenity over life like that of a fine day, when no cloud conceals the blue æther, nor a blaſt ruffles the ſtilneſs of the air; but a crafty and deſigning boſom is all tumult and darkneſs, and may be ſaid to reſemble a miſty and diſordered atmoſphere in the comfortleſs climate of the poor Highlander. The one raiſes a man almoſt to the rank of an angel of light; the other ſinks him to a level with the powers of darkneſs.—The one conſtitutes a terreſtrial heaven in the breaſt; the other deforms and debaſes it till it becomes another hell.

An open and ingenuous diſpoſition is not only beautiful and moſt conducive to private happineſs, but productive of many virtues eſſential to the welfare of ſociety. What is ſociety without confidence? But if the ſelfiſh and mean ſyſtem, which is eſtabliſhed and recommended among many whoſe advice and example have weight, ſhould univerſally prevail, in whom, and in what ſhall we be able to confide? It is already ſhocking

ing to a liberal mind to obſerve, what a multitude of papers, parchments, oaths, and ſolemn engagements are required, even in a trivial negociation. On the contrary, how comfortable and how honourable to human nature, if promiſes were bonds, and aſſertions affidavits! What pleaſure, and what improvement would be derived from converſation, if every one would dare to ſpeak his real ſentiments, with modeſty and decorum indeed, but without any unmanly fear of offending, or ſervile deſire to pleaſe for the ſake of intereſt! To pleaſe by honeſt means and from the pure motives of friendſhip and philanthropy is a duty; but they who ſtudy the art of pleaſing merely for their own ſakes, are, of all characters, thoſe which ought leaſt to pleaſe, and which appear, when the maſque is removed, the moſt diſguſtful. Truth, and ſimplicity of manners, are not only eſſential to virtue and happineſs, but, as objects of taſte, truly beautiful. Good minds will always be pleaſed with them, and bad minds we need not wiſh to pleaſe.

Since cunning and deceit are thus odious in themſelves, and incompatible with real happineſs and dignity, I cannot help thinking, that thoſe inſtructors of the riſing generation who have inſiſted on ſimulation and diſſimulation, on the *penſieri ſtretti*, on the thouſand tricks of worldly wiſdom, are no leſs miſtaken in their ideas, than mean, contracted, and illiberal. Liſten not, ye generous young men, whoſe hearts are yet untainted, liſten not to the deluſive advice of men ſo deluded, or ſo baſe. Have courage enough to avow the ſentiments of your ſouls, and let your countenance and your tongue be the heralds of your hearts. Pleaſe, conſiſtently with truth and honour, or be contented not to pleaſe. Let juſtice and benevolence fill your boſom, and they will ſhine ſpontaneouſly like the real gem without the aid of a foil, and with the moſt durable and captivating brilliancy.

No.

No. CL. A REMEDY FOR DISCONTENT.

COMPLAINTS and murmurs are often loudeſt and moſt frequent among thoſe who poſſeſs all the external means of temporal enjoyment. Something is ſtill wanting, however high and opulent their condition, fully to complete their ſatisfaction. Suppoſe an indulgent Providence to accompliſh every deſire; are they now at laſt contented? Alas! no; their uneaſineſs ſeems for ever to encreaſe, in proportion as their real neceſſities are diminiſhed. It is in vain then to endeavour to make them happy by adding to their ſtore, or aggrandizing their honours. Their appetite is no leſs inſatiable than their taſte faſtidious.

But there yet may remain a remedy. Let thoſe, who are miſerable among riches and grandeur, leave, for a moment, their elevated rank, and deſcend from their palaces to the humble habitations of real and unaffected woe. If their hearts are not deſtitute of feeling, they will return from the ſad ſcenes to their cloſets, and on their knees pour forth the ejaculations of gratitude to that univerſal Parent, who has given them abundance, and exempted them from the thouſand ills, under the preſſure of which the greater part of His children drag the load of life. Inſtead of ſpending their hours in brooding over their own imaginary evils, they will devote them to the alleviation of real miſery among the deſtitute ſons of indigence, in the neglected walks of vulgar life.

That one half of the world knows not how the other half lives, is a common and juſt obſervation. A fine lady, ſurrounded with every means of accommodation and luxury, complains in a moment of *ennui*, that ſurely no mortal is ſo wretched as herſelf. Her ſufferings are too great for her acute ſenſibility. She expects pity from all her acquaintance, and pleaſes herſelf with the idea that ſhe is an example of ſingular misfortune, and remarkable patience. Phyſicians attend,

tend, and with affected ſolicitude feel the healthy pulſe, which, however, they dare not pronounce healthy, leſt they ſhould give offence, by attempting to ſpoil the refined luxury of fancied woe. To be ſuppoſed always ill, and conſequently to be always exciting the tender attention and enquiries of all around, is a ſtate ſo charming in the ideas of the weak, luxurious, and indolent minds of ſome faſhionable ladies, that many ſpend their lives in a perpetual ſtate of imaginary convaleſcence. There is ſomething ſo indelicate in being hale, hearty, and ſtout, like a roſy milk-maid, that a very fine and very high-bred lady, is almoſt ready to faint at the idea. From exceſſive indulgence, ſhe becomes at laſt in reality what ſhe at firſt only fancied herſelf, a perpetual invalid. By a juſt retribution, ſhe is really puniſhed with that wretchedneſs, of which ſhe ungratefully and unreaſonably complained in the midſt of health, eaſe, and opulence.

One might aſk all the ſiſterhood and fraternity of rich and healthy murmurers, Have you compared your ſituation and circumſtances with that of thoſe of your fellow-creatures who are condemned to labour in the gold mines of Peru? Have you compared your ſituation with that of thoſe in your own country, who have hardly ever ſeen the ſun, but live confined in tin mines, lead mines, ſtone quarries, and coal pits? Before you call yourſelf wretched, take a ſurvey of the gaols, in which unfortunate and honeſt debtors are doomed to pine for life; walk through the wards of an hoſpital; think of the hardſhips of a common ſoldier or ſailor: think of the galley-ſlave, the day-labourer; nay, the common ſervant in your own houſe; think of your poor neighbour at the next door; and if there were not danger of its being called unpolite and methodiſtical, I would add, think of Him who, for your ſake, ſweated, as it were, drops of blood on Calvary.

It is, indeed, a duty to conſider the evils of thoſe who are placed beneath us; for the chief purpoſe of chriſtianity is, to alleviate the miſeries of that part of mankind, whom, indeed, the world deſpiſes; but whom, He who made them pities, like as a father pitieth his own children. Their miſeries are not fanci-

ful,

ful, their complaints are not exaggerated. The clergy, when they are called upon to visit the sick, or to baptize new-born infants, are often spectators of such scenes, as would cure the discontented of every malady. The following representation is but too real, and may be paralleled in many of its circumstances, in almost every parish throughout the kingdom.

The minister of a country village was called upon to baptize an infant just born. The cottage was situated on a lonely common, and as it was in the midst of the winter, and the floods were out, it was absolutely necessary to wade through the lower room to a ladder, which served instead of stairs. The chamber (and it was the only one) was so low, that you could not stand upright in it; there was one window which admitted air as freely as light, for the rags which had been stuffed into the broken panes were now taken out to contribute to the covering of the infant. In a dark corner of the room stood a small bedstead without furniture, and on it lay the dead mother, who had just expired in labour for want of assistance. The father was sitting on a little stool by the fire-place, though there was no fire, and endeavouring to keep the infant warm in his bosom; five of the seven children, half naked, were asking their father for a piece of bread, while a fine boy, of about three years old, was standing by his mother at the bed-side, and crying, as he was wont to do, "Take me, "take me, mammy." "Mammy is asleep," said one of his sisters, with two tears standing on her cheeks; "mam-"my is asleep, Johnny, go play with the baby on daddy's "knee." The father took him up on his knee, and his grief, which had hitherto kept him dumb, and in a state of temporary insensibility, burst out in a torrent of tears, and relieved his heart, which seemed ready to break. "Don't cry, pray don't cry," said the eldest boy, "the nurse is coming up stairs with a two-"penny loaf in her hand, and mammy will wake pre-"sently, and I will carry her the largest piece." Upon this, an old woman, crooked with age, and clothed in tatters, came hobbling on her little stick into the room, and after heaving a groan calmly sat down, dressed the child in its rags; then divided the loaf as far

as it would go, and informed the poor man that the churchwardens, to whom she had gone, would send some relief, as soon as they had dispatched a naughty baggage to her own parish, who had delivered herself of twins in the Esquire's hovel. Relief indeed was sent, and a little contribution afterwards raised by the interposition of the minister. If he had not seen the case, it would have passed on as a common affair, and a thing of course.

Ministers and medical practitioners are often witnesses to scenes even more wretched than this; where, to poverty, cold, nakedness, and death, are added, the languors of lingering and loathsome diseases, and the torments of excruciating pain. A feeling heart among the rich and the great, who are at the same time querulous without cause, would learn a lesson in many a garret of Broad St. Giles's or Shoreditch, more efficacious than all the lectures of the moral or divine philosopher.

I cannot help mentioning and applauding a mode of charity of late much encouraged in this metropolis, which is indeed distinguished above all others for the wisdom and variety of its eleemosynary institutions. Dispensaries are established for the poor, and patients visited at their own habitation by physicians of allowed skill and distinguished character. I will only take the liberty to express a wish, that some regulations may be made to prevent this noble design from being perverted, like many others, to purposes of private interest.

No. CLI. ON THE UTILITY OF RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES, AND OF ADMITTING MUSIC AND EXTERNAL MAGNIFICENCE IN PLACES OF DEVOTION.

IF all men were enlightened by education and philosophy, and at all hours actuated by the principles of reason, it would be unnecessary to have recourse to external objects in producing devout and virtuous affections.

tions. But as there must always be a great majority, who, from the want of opportunities or capacities for improvement, are weak and ignorant; and as even among the wise and learned there are none who are constantly exempted from the common infirmities of human nature, it becomes expedient to devise modes of operating on the soul through the medium of the senses. It was for this reason, that in all great communities the officers and offices of religion have been surrounded with whatever is calculated to rouse the attention, to interest the heart, to strike the eye, and to elevate the imagination.

I cannot help thinking, therefore, that those well-meaning reformers, who wish to divest religion of external splendour, are unacquainted with the nature of man, or influenced by narrow motives. They mean, perhaps, to spiritualize every thing, and the purpose is laudable; but they know not, or they consider not, that ordinary spirits, such as are those of the vicious and vulgar, are most easy and effectually touched by the instrumentality of exterior and material objects. He who wishes to penetrate to the recesses of the vulgar soul, will succeed better by the co-operation of the eyes and the ears, than merely by addressing the rational faculty.

An idea may be formed of the potency of sounds and sights, unassisted by reason, if we contemplate their effect in war. The drum, the fife, the habiliments of a soldier, the flag, and all the pomp and parade of military transactions, contribute, perhaps, more than any sense of duty, or any native or acquired sentiments of bravery, to lead on the embattled phalanx even to the cannon's mouth. It is something operating in the mind in a similar manner, which most easily bows the stubborn knees of the hardened offender, and subdues to softness the steely heart on which no force of argument could of itself stamp an impression. There are few who cannot hear or see, but many who cannot understand. All can feel a powerful stroke on the fancy or passions, but few are affected by a syllogism.

Music therefore, poetry, painting, and architecture, may very reasonably be associated as auxiliaries of an empress, whose subjects are rebellious. And I cannot help

help thinking, that they who repudiate all ornament, and all the modes of affecting the ſenſes of the vulgar in the offices of religion as indecent, impious, or improper, do not recollect the temple of Solomon, but ſuffer their good ſenſe to be overpowered in this inſtance by the zeal of a barbarous fanaticiſm.

The offices of religion where muſic and artificial embelliſhments are admitted, become ſo alluring, that thoſe who would never think of their more ſerious duties, are often invited by them to the church, and gradually converted. Like the rake of antiquity, who mingled in the audience of a philoſopher with a deſign to ridicule him, but who was made a convert before his departure, many of the looſe and profligate votaries of vice, have been enticed by the muſic, and afterwards reformed by the ſermon, which they intended to ſlight, and perhaps to deride.

The proceſſions and pompous formalities of religion, however exploded in the warmth of reformation as papiſtical reliques, are certainly uſeful in the community, when they are not ſuffered to exceed the bounds of moderation. They were eſteemed and obſerved in antient Athens and antient Rome, by thoſe who loved and enjoyed liberty in its fulleſt extent. They were found to aggrandize the majeſty of empire, to inſpire a generous enthuſiaſm in the minds of the people, and to furniſh them with an amuſement, not only innocent and improving, but attended with a very high and ſatisfactory pleaſure. None can deteſt popery more than myſelf; but yet it appears to me, that many of the ſplendid and auguſt ſcenes which that perſuaſion admits, are highly uſeful, if conſidered only as furniſhing a harmleſs entertainment to the lower orders of mankind. What charms can a London carman, chairman, Hackney-coachman, fiſhwoman, find in an Engliſh meeting or a church? but they would be delighted, and very powerfully affected with the grandeur and ſolemnity of a Romiſh proceſſion. As we have no allurements adapted to their ignorant and rude minds, they ſpend the Sunday at an alehouſe, even at the next door to the church, without a wiſh to enter the conſecrated place. All that paſſes there is above their comprehenſion. They are but little removed from the ſtate of the brutes,

brutes, and they must remain so; for there is nothing, in the only places in which they have an opportunity of instruction, to strike their imaginations, and penetrate through the passage of the senses to the dormant soul.

It is true, indeed, that we admit music in the established church; but it is also true, that it is in general a kind of music which if little better than discord to the vulgar ear. For in the metropolis, where organs are chiefly to be found, the performers are too fond of shewing their powers of execution, to be willing to play those simple tunes which can alone affect the minds of the simple and uninformed.

There has been much conversation on the subject of adorning St. Paul's cathedral with the productions of the pencil. Many artists, it is said, have offered to contribute the efforts of their ingenuity. Some scruples have arisen to impede the design. In this age they cannot be puritanical. I really think that judicious paintings would produce a desirable effect on the morals of the lower classes. But if painting is not to be admitted, there surely can be no objection to sculpture. Westminster-Abbey is crowded with monuments; and I will venture to predict, that our posterity will see St. Paul's equally honoured. I hope the event will not take place so late as to exclude such artists as Bacon, or if painting is admitted, such as Reynolds, West, and Romney.

No. CLII. ON THE PRESENT STATE OF PARLIAMENTARY ELOQUENCE.

IN taking a view of parliamentary eloquence, I mean to consider it as totally independent of party and politics, and solely as a subject of literary taste. It must be a peculiar narrowness of spirit which bestows or refuses applause to the productions of genius, because they are found to favour either a court or an opposition. I would allow an equal share of praise to equal genius, whether it appeared in a leader of the minority, or in the first minister of state.

The

The ſpeeches from the throne are little more than the formalities of office. It would be unreaſonable to expect in them the fire, the pathos, the argument of genuine and animated oratory. They poſſeſs an air of dignity highly proper and characteriſtical. They breathe a ſpirit of ſincerity and paternal tenderneſs, which at once marks the judgment of the compoſer, and endears the ſpeaker to his people. There was one on the commencement of the war with America, which deſerves to be ſelected as a very ſpirited and memorable harangue. It would have adorned the page of a Livy. "The reſolutions of parliament," ſays his Majeſty, "breathed a ſpirit of moderation and forbearance.— "I have acted with the ſame temper, anxious to pre- "vent, if it had been poſſible, the effuſion of the "blood of my ſubjects, and the calamities which are "inſeparable from a ſtate of war; ſtill hoping, that "my people in America would have diſcerned the "traitorous views of their leaders, and have been con- "vinced, that to be a ſubject to Great Britain, with "all its conſequences, is to be the freeſt member of "any civil ſociety in the known world.

"The rebellious war now levied is become more "general, and is manifeſtly carried on for the purpoſe "of eſtabliſhing an independent empire. I need not "dwell on the fatal effects of the ſucceſs of ſuch a plan. "The object is too important, the ſpirit of the Britiſh "nation too high, the reſources with which God hath "bleſſed her too numerous, to give up ſo many colo- "nies which ſhe has planted with great induſtry, "nurſed with great tenderneſs, encouraged with many "commercial advantages, and protected and defended "at much expence of blood and treaſure.——The "conſtant employment of my thoughts, and the moſt "earneſt wiſhes of my heart, tend wholly to the ſafety "and happineſs of all my people."——The ſpirit of a great King, and the tender ſolicitude which ſpeaks the true father of his people, render this ſpeech truly excellent, and, indeed, its excellence was evinced by its effect; for ſoon after it was diſſeminated over the nation, the American war, which was once univer- ſally odious, became a popular meaſure. Little did the compoſer of the above paſſage conceive, that in a few

years the *high ſpirit of the Britiſh nation* would be reduced to the humiliating neceſſity of ſupplicating for peace the *deluded* people of America.

In an aſſembly, like the higher houſe, conſiſting of men, in whoſe education no expence has been ſpared, who are, or who ought to be, animated by their own exalted ſituation and the examples of an illuſtrious anceſtry, one might reaſonably expect to find frequent examples of diſtinguiſhed eloquence. But it really would be difficult to name a ſingle peer who has attracted notice or admiration for the claſſical elegance of his matter or his language. The law lords, relying on their profeſſional knowledge, do, indeed, frequently make long and bold ſpeeches. Accuſtomed to browbeat the evidence at the bar, and dictate on the bench, ſome of them have retained their inſolence and effrontery when advanced to the woolſack. But noiſe, obſtinacy, and imperious dictation, though even an upſtart chancellor ſhould uſe them, cannot pleaſe an attic or a Roman taſte, nor obtain the praiſe of pure and legitimate oratory. Its rough and boiſterous vehemence may, indeed, frighten a puiſne race of peers into an implicit acquieſcence with the will of a miniſter, but it will not deſerve the eſteem of thoſe, who, in the receſſes of their libraries, appreciate its merit as a work of literature. A few dukes and lords in oppoſition have not been deficient in noiſe nor in violence, but their barbarous language, matter, and manner, muſt aſſign them a rank among the Goths, and not among the poliſhed ſons of Athens and Rome. Of all the ſpeeches ſpoken in the houſe, how few have ever been collected and preſerved in libraries, as models of claſſical elegance. Paſſion and perſonal animoſity have, indeed, produced many invectives, which gratify the ſpleen of party, and are for the time extolled beyond all the productions of preceding ingenuity. But is there extant a ſingle volume of ſpeeches, by the moſt famous among the orators of the upper houſe, which can be produced as a claſſical book, or ſtand in competition with the orations of Cicero? I think it neceſſary to repeat, that my remarks have not the leaſt reference to party. I am in ſearch of an orator to whom the epithet of claſſical

may

may be justly applied. I regret that the fury of party and the meanness of servility, has for the most part excluded that true taste, true grace, and true spirit, which is necessary to form a classical orator, from the harangues of an assembly, which may be deemed the most august in Europe.

The House of Commons has always been esteemed a very distinguished theatre of modern eloquence. And there indeed, notwithstanding the same impediments which prevail among the peers, it is easy to produce many splendid examples. In the House of Commons, men have been stimulated by the most powerful motives, by the hopes of rising; in the House of Lords they have already risen. But though we join in the applause of common fame, yet let us ask, where are to be found the volumes of oratorical elegance? Have the speeches which have gained the praise of admiring kingdoms, been no where collected and recorded? Do we lock them up in our book-cases, and put them into the hands of our children as models for imitations, as lessons to form their young minds, and raise a succession of orators and patriots? No; the speeches are celebrated at first, and while they answer a temporary purpose. They are like vegetables of a night, or insects of a day. They have seldom that solidity of merit which can render the ore valuable when the stamp is effaced, and the occasion of it almost forgotten and quite disregarded; which can preserve the plate still saleable after the fashion is antiquated. Glorious was the eloquence of Mr. Pitt. Nations shook at the thunder of his voice. But where are the harangues? are they preserved as illustrious models for the instruction of posterity? Instead of being engraven on brass, they are almost sunk into an oblivion, like the soldiers whose bones once whitened the plains of Germany. Yet I mean not to detract from his glories. Language can scarcely supply terms to express the weight of his authority, the magnitude of his mind and his character, and the efficacy with which he thought, decided, spoke, and acted. But let it not escape the reader's attention, that we are enquiring for a rival to the masterly and transcendent excellence of a Cicero and a Demosthenes.

If

If ſuch has of late appeared among us, the curioſity of this age would have preſerved it; and if it be preſerved, let the volume be openly produced, and the public will embrace it as an invaluable treaſure.

There are, indeed, in the ſenate, ſeveral deſperate declaimers, who, wiſhing to make themſelves of conſequence, and to retrieve their own affairs, which they have ruined at the gaming-table, exert all their effrontery and all their volubility in any cauſe, and on any ſide, which eventually may promote their intereſt, or gratify their ambition. The ignorant and diſcontented extol the bravado who thus draws courage from deſpair, as a prodigy of abilities, and the mirror of eloquence. But the good, the wiſe, and the judicious obſerver, pities and deſpiſes him as an unprincipled brawler, with as little taſte in eloquence as honeſty; and as the mere rival of the noiſy ſpouters at the Forum, or the Robinhood.

The applauſe indeed beſtowed on one orator, is ſcarcely adequate to his literary merit. Mr. Burke has produced to the world very honourable teſtimonies of his natural abilities, and his acquired taſte. What orations are there publiſhed of modern Members, which can bear a compariſon with thoſe of Mr. Burke? With what dignity he addreſſed the people of Briſtol; and how mean and little did they appear, contraſted with him whom they rejected! Like Socrates before the judges, he appeared more like their maſter than their ſuppliant. He concludes with a ſpirit worthy of him who wrote on the ſublime and beautiful; worthy of a poliſhed antient in the beſt of ages. "And now, gentlemen," he concludes, "on this ſerious day, when I come, "as it were, to make up my account with you; let "me take to myſelf ſome degree of honeſt pride on the "nature of the charges brought againſt me. I do not "here ſtand accuſed of venality, or neglect of duty. "It is not ſaid that, in the long period of my ſervice, "I have, in a ſingle inſtance, ſacrificed the ſlighteſt "of your intereſts to my ambition, or to my fortune. "It is not alleged, that to gratify any anger or "revenge of my own, or of my party, I have had a "ſhare in wronging or oppreſſing any one man in any

"deſcription.

" deſcription. No; the charges againſt me are all " of one kind, that I have puſhed the general prin- " ciples of general juſtice and benevolence too far; " further than a cautious policy would warrant, and " further than the opinions of many would go with " me. In every accident which may happen through " life, in pain, in ſorrow, in depreſſion, and diſtreſs, " I will think of this accuſation and be comforted."

There are not indeed many of the members who favour the public with their harangues, ſo that we have not an opportunity of judging of all ſo well as of Mr. Burke's. We muſt, however, acknowledge our great obligations to the ingenious Mr. Woodfall, the editor of the Morning Chronicle, whoſe memory ſeems equal to the inſtances of which we read, but which do not often occur in our intercourſe with ſociety.

No. CLIII. A LIFE OF LETTERS USUALLY A LIFE OF COMPARATIVE INNOCENCE.

IT is not the leaſt among the happy effects of a ſtudious life, that it withdraws the ſtudent from the turbulent ſcenes and purſuits, in which it is ſcarcely leſs difficult to preſerve innocence than tranquillity. Succeſsful ſtudy requires ſo much attention, and engroſſes ſo much of the heart, that he who is deeply engaged in it, though he may indeed be liable to temporary lapſes, will ſeldom contract an inveterate habit of immorality. There is in all books of character a reverence for virtue, and a tendency to inſpire a laudable emulation. He who is early, long, and ſucceſsfully converſant with them, will find his boſom filled with the love of truth, and finely affected with a delicate ſenſe of honour. By conſtantly exerciſing his reaſon, his paſſions are gradually reduced to ſubjection, and his head and heart keep pace with each other in improvement. But when I aſſert that ſuch are the conſequences of literary purſuits, it is neceſſary to diſtinguiſh between the real and pretended ſtudent; for

there

there are many desultory readers and volatile men of parts, who affect eccentricity, whose lives, if one may so express it, are uniformly irregular, and who consequently exhibit remarkable instances of misery and misfortune.

Folly and imprudence will produce moral and natural evil, their genuine offspring, in all situations and modes of life. The knowledge of arts and sciences cannot prevent the vices and the woes which must arise from the want of knowing how to regulate our private and social conduct. But where prudence and virtue are not deficient, I believe few walks of life are pleasanter and safer than those which lead through the regions of literature.

Many among mankind are involved in perpetual tumult, so that if they felt an inclination to consider their duty, their nature, their truest happiness, they really would not be able to find an opportunity. But he, whom Providence has bleft with an enlightened mind, and the command of his own time, is enabled to form his heart, and direct his choice according to the dictates of the most improved intellects, and the examples of the most accomplished characters. He is, indeed, a creature far superior to the common herd of men; and being acquainted with pure and exalted pleasures, is not under the necessity of seeking delight in the grosser gratifications. He considers not property as the chief good; he is therefore free from temptations to violate his integrity. Disappointment in matters of interest will never render him uneasy or discontented, for his books have discovered to him a treasure more valuable, in his estimation, than the riches of Peru. Through all the vicissitudes of life he has a source of consolation in the retirement of his library, and in the principles and reflections of his own bosom. From his reading he will collect a just estimate of the world and of all around him; and, as he will cherish no unreasonable expectations, he will be exempted from severe disappointment.

The conversation of many abounds with slander and detraction, not originally and entirely derived from a malignity of nature, but also from ignorance, from a vacancy

vacancy of intellect, and from an inability to expatiate on general and generous topics. But whatever be the motive of them, it is certain that few crimes are more injurious to private happineſs, and oppoſite to the ſpirit of our amiable religion, than ſlander and detraction. The man of reading is under no temptation to calumniate his neighbour from the defect of ideas, or a want of taſte for liberal and refined converſation. He intereſts himſelf in his neighbour's happineſs; but does not pry into the affairs, nor ſit in judgment on the domeſtic arrangements, of another's family. Moſt of the topics of ſcandal are too little and too low for him. He will not ſtoop from his elevation low enough to pick the dirty trifles from the ground. His thoughts are engaged in elegant and ſpeculative ſubjects, far removed from all which tend to excite envy, jealouſy, or malevolence.

The want of employment is one of the frequent cauſes of vice; but he who loves a book will never want employment. The purſuits of learning are boundleſs, and they preſent to the mind a delightful variety which cannot be exhauſted. No life is long enough to ſee all the beautiful pictures which the arts and ſciences, or which hiſtory, poetry, and eloquence are able to diſplay. The man of letters poſſeſſes the power of calling up a ſucceſſion of ſcenes to his view infinitely numerous and diverſified. He is therefore ſecured from that unhappy ſtate which urges many to vice and diſſipation, merely to fill a painful vacuity. Even though his purſuits ſhould be trifling, and his diſcoveries unimportant, yet they are harmleſs to others, and uſeful to himſelf, as preſervatives of his innocence. Let him not be ridiculed or condemned, even though he ſhould ſpend his time in collecting and deſcribing moths, moſſes, ſhells, birds, weeds, or coins; for he who loves theſe things ſeldom ſets his affections on pelf, or any of thoſe objects which corrupt and divide human ſociety. He who finds his pleaſures in a muſeum or a library, will not often be ſeen in the tavern, in the brothel, or at the gaming-table. He is pleaſed if he poſſeſſes a non-deſcript foſſil, and envies not the wretched enjoyments of the intemperate, nor the ill-gotten wealth of the oppreſſor or extortioner.

But

But his purſuits have uſually a title to much greater praiſe than that of being inoffenſive. Suppoſe him in any of the liberal profeſſions. If a clergyman, for inſtance, he devotes his time and abilities to the preparation of diſſuaſives from vice, from folly, from miſconduct, from infidelity, from all that contributes to aggravate the wretchedneſs of wretched human nature. Here the pleaſures naturally reſulting from literary occupation are improved by the ſublime ſenſations of active benevolence, the comfortable conſciouſneſs of advancing the trueſt happineſs of thoſe among our poor fellow-creatures who have not enjoyed the advantages of education. In the performance of the godlike office of a true pariſh prieſt, there is a neceſſity of ſetting an example, and of preſerving decorum of character; a neceſſity which conduces much to the ſecurity of innocence. It is often a great happineſs to be placed in a rank where, to the reſtraints of conſcience and morality, are added the fear of peculiar ſhame, loſs, and diſgrace, neceſſarily conſequent on ill behaviour. Human Nature wants every ſupport to keep it from lapſing into depravity. Even intereſt and a ſolicitude for reputation, when, in ſome thoughtleſs interval, the pillars of virtue begin to totter, may ſtop the fall. The poſſeſſion of a valuable character which may be loſt, and of a dignity which muſt be ſupported, are often very uſeful auxiliaries in defending the citadel againſt the temporary aſſaults of paſſion and temptation.

Since, then, the purſuit of letters is attended with many circumſtances peculiarly favourable to innocence, and conſequently to enjoyment of the pureſt and moſt permanent ſpecies, they who have been fixed in ſo deſirable a life as a life of learning, ought to be grateful to Providence for their fortunate lot, and endeavour to make the beſt return in their power, by devoting their leiſure, their abilities, and their acquirements, to the glory of God, and the benefit of mankind.

No. CLIV. ON THE ADVANTAGE WHICH MAY BE DERIVED TO THE TENDER AND PATHETIC STYLE, FROM USING THE WORDS AND PHRASES OF SCRIPTURE.

IT is obſervable, that an audience often laughs or yawns in the moſt intereſting ſcenes of a modern tragedy;—a lamentable proof of the poet's imbecility. The poet! he may, indeed, be a verſifier and a declaimer, but he is no poet, who tells a tragic tale without eliciting a tear. Let us not profane the ſacred name of poet by beſtowing it on the feeble poetaſter.

It is not enough that the language of a tragedy is flowery, the ſimilies and metaphors brilliant, the verſe melodious; there muſt be a charm added by the creative power of almighty genius, which no didactic rules can teach, which cannot be adequately deſcribed, but which is powerfully felt by the vibrations of the heart-ſtrings, and which cauſes an irreſiſtible overflowing of the Δακρυων πηγαι, the *ſacri fontes lachrymarum*.

Florid diction and pompous declamation are, indeed, found to be the leaſt adapted of all modes of addreſs to affect the finer ſenſibilities of nature. Plain words, without epithets, without metaphors, without ſimilies, have oftener excited emotions of the tendereſt ſympathy, than the moſt laboured compoſition of Corneille. Ye who would learn how to touch the heart, go not to the ſchools of France, but become the diſciples of Sophocles, Shakeſpeare, Sterne, and Chatterton. O ſimplicity! thou captivating ſimplicity! 'tis thine at once to affect what all the artifices of rhetoric, with all its tropes and figures, tediouſly and vainly labour to accompliſh. 'Tis thine to diſſolve the hardeſt heart, and to force even ſtubborn nerves to tremble. A few words of ſimple pathos will penetrate the ſoul to the quick, when a hundred lines of declamation ſhall aſſail it as feebly and ineffectually, as a gentle gale the mountain of Plinlimmon.

A writer

A writer of taſte and genius may avail himſelf greatly in pathetic compoſitions, by adopting the many words and phraſes, remarkable for their beautiful ſimplicity, which are interſperſed in that pleaſing, as well as venerable book, the holy bible. I cannot, indeed, entirely agree with thoſe zealous critics who pretend to diſcover in the ſcriptures all the graces of all the beſt claſſics. To pleaſe the ear and imagination, were very inferior objects in the benevolent mind of Him who cauſed all holy ſcripture to be written for our uſe. But, at the ſame time, it is certain that they abound in ſuch beauties as never fail to pleaſe the moſt cultivated taſte. Beſides their aſtoniſhing ſublimity, they have many a paſſage exquiſitely tender and pathetic. Our admirable tranſlation has preſerved them in all their beauty, and an Engliſh writer may ſelect from it a diction better ſuited to raiſe the ſympathy of grief, than from the moſt celebrated models of human compoſition.

Sterne, who, though he is juſtly condemned for his libertiniſm, poſſeſſed an uncommon talent for the pathetic, has availed himſelf greatly of the ſcriptural language. In all his moſt affecting paſſages, he has imitated the turn, ſtyle, manner, and ſimplicity, of the ſacred writers, and in many of them has tranſcribed whole ſentences. He found no language of his own could equal the finely expreſſive diction of our common tranſlation. There are a thouſand inſtances of his imitating ſcripture interſperſed in all the better parts of his works, and no reader of common obſervation can paſs by them unnoticed. I will quote only one or two inſtances taken from the moſt admired pieces in the tender ſtyle. "Maria, though not tall, was never-
"theleſs of the firſt order of fine forms. Affliction had
"touched her looks with ſomething that was ſcarcely
"earthly, and ſo much was there about her of all that
"the heart wiſhes, or the eye looks for in woman, that
"could the traces be ever worn out of her brain, or
"thoſe of Eliza out of mine, ſhe ſhould not only eat
"of my bread, and drink of my cup, but Maria
"ſhould lie in my boſom, and be unto me as a
"daughter.

"Adieu

"Adieu, poor luckleſs maiden! imbibe the oil and "wine which the compaſſion of a ſtranger as he ſo-"journeth on his way, now pours into thy wounds. "The Being who has twice bruiſed thee can only bind "them up for ever." Again, in his deſcription of the captive, "As I darkened the little light he had, he "lifted up a hopeleſs eye towards the door, then "caſt it down, ſhook his head, and went on with his "work of affliction. I heard his chains upon his "legs, as he turned his body to lay his little ſtick "upon the bundle. He gave a deep ſigh. I ſaw the "iron enter into his ſoul." It is eaſy, but it is not neceſſary, to adduce many more inſtances in which a writer, who eminently excelled in the power of moving the affections, felt himſelf unequal to the taſk of advancing the ſtyle of pathos to its higheſt perfection, and ſought aſſiſtance of the bible.

It is eaſy to ſee that the writer of ſo many tender and ſimple paſſages had imitated the delightful book of Ruth. With what pleaſure did a man of his feeling read, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return "from following after thee; for whither thou goeſt, "I will go; and where thou lodgeſt, I will lodge; thy "people ſhall be my people, and thy God my God; "where thou dieſt will I die, and there will I be "buried." Sterne ſtole the very ſpirit of this paſſage, and indeed of all the fine ſtrokes of tenderneſs, and many an one there is, in a book which is often laid aſide as abſurd and abſolete. The choice which Sterne has made of texts and of citations from the ſcriptures in his ſermons, are proofs that he (who was one of the beſt judges) was particularly ſtruck with the affecting tenderneſs and lovely ſimplicity of ſcriptural language.

The poet, therefore, who means to produce a tragedy, which ſhall be able to ſtand its ground even after the firſt nine nights, without the aid of puffing, and without filling the pit and boxes with ordeſs, ſhould ſometimes go to the ſame fountain, and drink the waters of poetical inſpiration of which Sterne drank ſo copiouſly. He will improve greatly by ſtudying the language and hiſtories of Joſeph, Saul and Jonathan, of Ruth, of Job,

Job, of the Pſalms, of Iſaiah, of Jeremiah, of many ſingle paſſages every where interſperſed, and of the parables in the new Teſtament. Judgment and taſte are certainly neceſſary to ſelect; but he may depend upon it, that a word or two well ſelected will gain him the trueſt applauſe, that which is conveyed in ſighs and tears. Let him fully perſuade himſelf, that the only method of operating powerfully on the feelings of nature, is to renounce art and affectation, and to adhere to truth and ſimplicity.

Something is neceſſary to be done to produce an alteration. The theatric ſtate is in its decline. It cannot much longer be ſupported by fine dreſſes, painted ſcenes, muſic, dancing, and pantomime. We have hearts as well as ears and eyes; if they know not how to touch our paſſions at old Drury, let us away to the Opera-houſe, and ſee the Veſtris.

No. CLV. ON THE FIGURE PARRHESIA, OR ON EXPRESSING ONE'S SENTIMENTS FREELY.

THEY, whoſe wiſdom conſiſts in cunning and caution, who, conſider preferment as the only or moſt valuable object of human purſuit, and who ſtand in awe of grandeur independently of perſonal merit and character, will often ſhake their heads as they read my eſſays (if they read them at all), and blame the writer's imprudence, in venturing to expreſs himſelf on many dangerous ſubjects without reſerve. It is madneſs, they exclaim, to cut himſelf off from all chance of eccleſiaſtical preferment, to exclude himſelf, and perhaps his children, from the ſunſhine of patronage; and (to uſe the words of a celebrated orator) "to create a long, "dull, dreary, unvaried viſto of deſpair and excluſion."

But, O ye wiſe ones of the world (an honeſt and independent writer might ſay), ſignificantly as ye whiſper among each other, and hug yourſelves on your

own profound sagacity, I value not your bastard wisdom: and though I pretend not to despise either honours or emoluments fairly and openly obtained, I think the means ye use in their pursuit base and mean, and that ye purchase all you possess at a price too dear. Ye resign your reason, your liberty, and, I fear, too often, your truth and honour. Ye are real slaves, and the robes of office and dignity in which ye pride yourselves, are but the liveries of a splendid servitude. From one instance of your spirit and wisdom let the public judge of all. Dare ye, if raised by a long course of mean servility to a seat in the British senate, to give a vote, or express a single sentiment according to your own judgment, and without first religiously consulting the god of your idolatry? Censure me no more for an honest freedom. Blush rather at your own meanness and cowardice. Pity me no more, as excluding myself by temerity from the favours of the great. I am happier in the liberty of ranging, in thought, through all the mazes of human life, and of uttering my undisguised sentiments on whatever I see and hear, than in gaining favour where favour is to be gained, merely by submitting to the meanness of concealing truth, and speaking according to the dictates of self-interest alone. Blame me no more till you point out the passage in the gospel, where boldness of rebuke is prohibited, and where a professed servant of Jesus Christ is taught to bow the knee to an unbelieving and debauched ruler of this world.

But you are actuated by envy, softly suggests the successful chaplain, the *quondam* tutor, and travelling companion of a graceless duke. You rail, says he, at what you cannot reach. But, my lord, give me leave to ask, whether you are not actuated by avarice and worldly ambition, vices in a christian pastor, no less culpable than envy. By what were you actuated when you gained the favour of the patron who raised you to your honours, merely by drinking and caballing for him at a contested election. Your patron professes himself a deist, and you know he keeps many concubines. By what were you actuated when you were always seeking his company, and dining at his table? Was it a desire

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to convert him from the error of his ways? Did you ever dare to hint your diſpleaſure at them? Did they diſpleaſe you?

And, with reſpect to envy as the motive of my freedom, your lordſhip will do well to conſider, that he who envies, eagerly wiſhes to obtain the object. He who eagerly deſires to obtain, uſually purſues the moſt probable means of ſucceſs. But your lordſhip ſhall judge by your own experience, whether what I have ſaid is, in the ſmalleſt degree, like the methods which are found moſt ſucceſsful. Does it tally with your own recipe for riſing at court?

Indeed, my lord, you muſt excuſe me. I cannot think as you do; your objects and mine are totally different, and muſt be differently purſued. Enjoy your mitre and your cuſhion; but let me alſo enjoy my liberty, or, if you chuſe to call it ſo, my humour. I will boaſt a ſuperiority in one reſpect; I have no maſter, ſave one.

But you ſay I am gratifying my vanity. If to ſeek an honeſt fame, be to ſeek the gratification of my vanity, I plead guilty to the charge. I dare avow a wiſh to poſſeſs the public eſteem, but I purſue no mean or ſiniſter method to procure it. I rely for their favour on my love of truth, and the ſincerity of my zeal in their ſervice. Their good opinion is a delightful and ſufficient reward. Not that I ever affected to renounce or to deſpiſe preferment, but it comes unſought for, as well as unlooked for, if it comes at all.

To preſerve the favour of the public, and the approbation of my own heart, I think it neceſſary to continue, while I write, the open declaration of my ſentiments, ſuch as they are, equally uninfluenced by mean hopes and cowardly apprehenſions. Individuals may apply what was never meant to be applied, to themſelves; and, in the warmth of an exaſperated mind, may ſhew their reſentment by neglect or cenſure. Hitherto I have known nothing of that kind of which I can complain. Arrows from the hand of a recluſe, like myſelf, have uſually fallen, like a weapon from the nerveleſs Priam. What avail the attacks of the moraliſt, without the aſſiſtance of wealth, faſhion, and intereſt?

Let me then be permitted (ſuch a writer might proceed to ſay in his defence) to employ myſelf in peace and innocence, and to amuſe readers of congenial ſentiments, by a free communication of feelings undiſguiſed by art, and uttered boldly as they were excited warmly, by men and manners paſſing in review. Let the ſympathetic tribe, who, in the exuberance of their compaſſion, expreſs their anxiety leſt I ſhould hurt my intereſt, reſerve their pity for objects of more merit. I am happy in the idea, that nothing which I have written can injure the intereſt of any one but the writer.

In times of peculiar exigency (he might add), there may be a moral as well as military heroiſm. He deſerves to be degraded from his rank, who is not ready to incur every hazard in the cauſe which he has juſtly undertaken; and not only to forego honours and advantages in the defence of what he deems the truth, but, if circumſtances ſhould require it, to die in its confirmation. A timid and lukewarm prudence in a good cauſe is little better than deſertion.

No. CLVI. ON READING MERELY WITH A VIEW TO AMUSEMENT.

THERE are many who ſpend much of their time in reading, but who read, as they play at cards, with no other intention but to paſs the time, without labouring under the intolerable burthen of a total inactivity. The more trifling the book, the better they ſuppoſe it ſuited to their purpoſe. Plays, pamphlets, memoirs, novels, and whatever entertains them without requiring any great degree of attention, conſtitute the whole of their library. Even theſe are read in a deſultory manner, without the interference of taſte, or the trouble of ſelection. Indeed this light food for the mind is ſo much wanted, that the circulating libraries lay in a ſtock of it every year; and an aſſortment of ſummer reading is in as great requeſt at the bookſellers in the watering-places, as a variety of new ſpring patterns at the ſilk-mercers in Pall Mall. The

fine

fine lady and gentleman, who have nothing to do but to purſue their amuſement, and in whoſe delicate minds the dreſſing of the hair is a buſineſs of the firſt importance, commonly ſpend two or three hours every day under the hands of the friſeur; but then the time is by no means waſted, for it is ſpent in ſummer reading; and as the volumes which contain ſummer reading are not large folios, and neither printed on the ſmalleſt type, nor on the moſt crowded page, one of them juſt ſerves to fill up the hours devoted to the artiſt of the comb. The gentle ſtudent riſes from his chair when the operation is completed, takes off his flannel gown, ſends back the half bound book to the library, and enters upon the momentous buſineſs, without any odious gravity or ſerioufneſs, which might perhaps have remained with him, had his morning ſtudies required deep thought, or communicated to him a ſeries of ſober reflections. He can, indeed, on a rainy day, devour half a dozen volumes of ſummer reading, and be no more incommoded than when he ſwallows as many jellies and puffs at the faſhionable confectioners.

It muſt be allowed that this kind of reading, trifling as it is, may often conſtitute an amuſing and a very innocent paſtime. But I will venture to ſay, that uſeful and improving reading might be found, that ſhould be equally, and indeed more entertaining. The ſame time ſpent on books of character, which is laviſhed away on literary traſh, would render many a mind, which is now vain and ſuperficial, really elegant, prudent, and well informed. The time ſpent under the operation of the hair-dreſſer is very properly ſpent in reading; but why ſhould not the works of the Engliſh claſſics be uſed in preference to a vile tranſlation from a fooliſh French novel? To a taſte not vitiated, the works of Shakeſpeare, Milton, Dryden, Pope, Addiſon, and many of their ſucceſsful followers, are much more pleaſing than the inelegant and haſty productions of hireling writers, whoſe indigence compels them to be leſs ſolicitous about quality than quantity; who ſtudy not ſo much what is congruous to taſte and truth, as what will catch the notice of the general reader,

and

and anſwer the venal purpoſe of their employer by a rapid ſale. Have we not many true hiſtories, elegant in their ſtyle, abounding with matter moſt improving to the heart and underſtanding, and calculated to intereſt and entertain, in a very high degree, by gratifying curioſity? Unleſs we renounce our pretenſions to reaſon, we muſt confeſs that ſuch books are capable of furniſhing more pleaſure, excluſively of the improvement, than anonymous and unauthenticated anecdotes, memoirs, novels, voyages, travels, lives, and adventures.

There are thoſe who have read more volumes than the profoundeſt ſcholars in the nation, who yet are unacquainted with the elements of ſcience, with the moſt intereſting facts of true hiſtory, with the maxims of philoſophy, with the beauties of ſtyle, and with the extent and force of the language. They have read inattentively what indeed was ſcarcely worth attention; and they have immediately forgotten what was too futile to deſerve remembrance. Had they poſſeſſed judgment ſufficient to point out the proper books, and reſolution to purſue the dictates of their judgment, they would have enriched their minds with ineſtimable treaſures, and acquired the reputation and ſatisfaction of ſolid ſcholars. The ſame exertion of their eyes, the ſame conſumption of their time, the ſame ſedentary confinement, would have earned a prize of ſufficient value to repay them apply for every effort of diligence. But now they have, perhaps, injured their eyes, ruined their health, neglected their affairs, vitiated their taſte, and poſſibly corrupted their morals, or weakened their faith, with no return, but the amuſement of the moment, or the retention of falſe facts, diſtorted figures of life and manners, or trifling anecdotes, the lumber of the head and not the furniture.

Perſons advanced in life, or labouring under ſickneſs and infirmity, have an unqueſtionable right to amuſe themſelves with whatever can innocently alleviate their evils, and enable them to paſs away the lagging hours in a ſweet and tranſitory oblivion. Their reading, like their diet, may be light and more adapted to tickle a ſickly palate, than to afford ſolid and ſubſtantial nouriſhment. But in youth, health, and vigour,

who

who would voluntarily confine himself to the weakness and insipidity of water-gruel?

It is, indeed, lamentable to observe young persons of lively parts, and with a love of reading, devoting those years and those abilities, which might render them valuable members of society, to such studies as tend only to dissipate their ideas, to vitiate their morals, to womanize their spirits, and to render them the dastardly and degenerate sons of those to whom it was once a glorious distinction to bear the name of Britons.

No. CLVII. ON A METHOD OF STUDY, WRITTEN BY RINGELBERGIUS.

THERE is a little treatise on the method of study written by Ringelbergius, which, in the two last centuries, was a great favourite among scholars, and contributed much to animate their industry. The learned Erpenius acknowledges himself originally indebted to it for all his acquisitions. He met with it at the age of sixteen, and, in consequence of its suggestions, though he was then totally averse from a studious life, and had made no proficiency in learning, yet he afterwards became a distinguished scholar. The treatise had become scarce, and Erpenius generously printed a new edition, that others might partake of the benefit which he had himself enjoyed. He published it with the title of *Liber verè Aureus*, or the truly Golden Treatise.

In the epistle to the reader which Erpenius has prefixed, he speaks of the animating effect of the book in terms so warm, and with so much gratitude, that a student would be wanting to himself not to gratify his curiosity, by at least giving it a perusal. It is short, and contains many passages which tend to encourage the scholar in his pursuits, and to inspire him with an ardour and enthusiasm, like that excited in the soldier by the drum and trumpet, as he is marching on to battle. I believe there could not be found a better exhortation

exhortation to ſtudy for the uſe of boys, if the good paſſages were not diſgraced by others ſo ridiculous, as almoſt bring the writer under the imputation of lunacy. His literary enthuſiaſm had certainly tranſported him, in ſeveral inſtances, beyond the limits of his own reaſon.

I will ſelect a few hints from the little tract, which may not only ſerve as a curious ſpecimen to the Engliſh reader, but may rouze him from his indolence. The whole is, indeed, more valuable for the ſpirit and fire which it conduces to raiſe, than for its precepts and directions. It is rather exhortatory than didactic.

"How mean," ſays he, ſpeaking of the ſcope at which ſtudents ought to aim, "how timid, how abject, "muſt be that ſpirit which can ſit down contented "with mediocrity! As for myſelf, all that is within "me is on fire. I had rather," he proceeds in his ſtrong manner, "be torn in a thouſand pieces, than "relax my reſolution of reaching the ſublimeſt heights "of virtue and knowledge I am of opinion, that no-"thing is ſo arduous, nothing ſo admirable in human "affairs, which may not be obtained by the induſtry of "man. We are deſcended from heaven, thither let "us go, whence we derived our origin. Let nothing "ſatisfy us lower than the ſummit of all excellence. "This ſummit then," ſays he, "I point out as the "proper ſcope of the ſtudent.

"But labour muſt be beloved, and the pleaſures of "luxury deſpiſed. Shall we ſubmit to be extinguiſhed "for ever without honour, without remembrance, "ἀνδρῶδες οὐδὲν πεποιηκότες, without having done any "thing like men?" The whole of this chapter is written in a very uncommon ſtyle of literary enthuſiaſm, and I think it can hardly fail of inflaming a youthful imagination. If ſuch ideas were early infixed in the boſom of an ingenious and ingenuous boy, what improvement in virtue, and in all uſeful qualities, might not be expected?

"That we muſt never deſpair," is the title of his third chapter. "If in our aſcent we ſhould fall headlong "a thouſand times, we muſt begin to climb again "every time more ardently, and fly to the ſummit "with recruited vigour! Let no one be dejected if he

"is

" is not conſcious of any great advancement at firſt. " The merchant thinks himſelf happy if, after a ten " years voyage, after a thouſand dangers, he at laſt " improves his fortune; and ſhall we, like poor-" ſpirited creatures, give up all hope after the firſt " onſet? *Quodcunque imperavit animus obtinuit.* What-" ever the mind has commanded itſelf to do, it has " obtained its purpoſe.

" Riches muſt have no charms, compared to the " charms of literature. Poverty is favourable to the " ſucceſs of all literary purſuits. I mean not to throw " contempt on money in general, but on that exor-" bitant wealth which allures the mind from ſtudy. " But your parents," ſays he, " will rather chuſe " that you ſhould be guilty of perjury or murder, than " not know how to value money.

" The ſtudent muſt be deſirous of praiſe. It is a " promiſing preſage of ſucceſs to be rouſed by praiſe " when one ſhall have done well, and to be grieved and " incited to higher aims, on finding himſelf blamed or " outdone by another. He who aſpires at the ſummit " muſt be paſſionately fond of glory.

" Thus have the firſt qualities, indiſpenſably requi-" ſite in a youth devoted to ſtudy, been mentioned. He " muſt aim at the higheſt points, he muſt love labour, " he muſt never deſpair, he muſt deſpiſe riches, he muſt " be greedy of praiſe. It remains that we preſcribe " the methods. There are then three gradations in " the modes of ſtudy; hearing, teaching, writing. It " is a good and eaſy method to hear, it is a better and " eaſier to teach, and the beſt and eaſieſt of all to " write. Lectures are dull; becauſe it is tedious to " confine the liberty of thought to the voice of the " reader. But when we teach or write, the very ex-" erciſe itſelf precludes the tædium."

Though the treatiſe of Ringelbergius is ſhort, yet to make an uſeful abbreviation of it, would require more room than the limits I uſually preſcribe to my papers will allow. I mean only to give a little ſpecimen of the manner in which this very extra-ordinary writer has compoſed his once celebrated treatiſe. There are certainly many things in it which can ſcarcely fail to ſtimulate an honeſt mind, ſincerely

and ſeriouſly devoted to letters. A ſevere critic, or a lover of ridicule, will find much both in the matter and the ſtyle to cenſure and deride. But ſtill there is ſomething ſo honeſt and ſo warm in this writer, that a good-natured mind cannot help being entertained even with his abſurdities, and inclined to overlook them amidſt the greater abundance of valuable advice. I believe the copies are not very ſcarce, and earneſtly recommend, both to the young ſtudent and the lover of literary curioſities, to devote half an hour to the peruſal of it, if it ſhould fall into their hands.

Ringelbergius was a very ingenious man, not only in polite learning and in the ſciences, but in the arts of mechanical writing, painting, and engraving. Indeed theſe were his firſt purſuits and employments, and he did not apply himſelf to learning Latin till his ſeventeenth year; but ſuch was the force of his genius, that he then made a rapid proficiency. He was certainly a man of genius, and though not quite correct in his language, yet he wrote Latin with much more ſpirit and vivacity than moſt of the Dutch and German writers of his age. He acquired the Greek language, and could almoſt repeat Homer from beginning to end. He was well verſed in various ſciences, and wrote ingeniouſly upon them; but his tracts are, I believe, more curious than uſeful. He would have been an excellent writer, and profound philoſopher, had he lived in an age when the follies of judicial aſtrology were exploded, and hypotheſis reduced to the teſt of experiment.

No. CLVIII. ON THE FOLLY OF SACRIFICING COMFORT TO TASTE.

THERE are certain homely, but ſweet comforts and conveniences, the abſence of which no elegance can ſupply. Since however, they have nothing of external ſplendour, they are often ſacrificed to the gratification of vanity. We live too much in the

the eyes and minds of others, and too little to our own hearts, too little to our own consciences, and too little to our own satisfaction. We are more anxious to appear, than to be happy.

According to the present modes of living, and ideas of propriety, an ostentatious appearance must be at all events, and in all instances, supported. If we can preserve a glittering and glossy varnish, we disregard the interior materials and substance. Many shew a disposition in every part of their conduct, similar to that of the Frenchman, who had rather go without a shirt, than without ruffles; rather starve as a count, than enjoy affluence and independence as an honest merchant. Men idolize the great, and the distinctions of fashionable life, with an idolatry so reverential and complete, that they seem to mistake it for their duty towards God. For to use the words of the Catechism, do they not appear "to believe in them, to fear them, "to love them with all their hearts, with all their "minds, with all their souls, and with all their "strength, to worship them, to give them thanks, to "put their whole trust in them, to call upon them, "to honour their names and their words, and to serve "them truly all the days of their lives?" As they worship false gods, their blessings are of the kind which corresponds with the nature of their deities. They are all shadowy and insubstantial; dreams, bubbles, and meteors, which dance before their eyes, and lead them to perdition.

It is really unaccountable to behold families of a competent fortune, and respectable rank, who (while they deny themselves even the common pleasures of a plentiful table, while their kitchen is the cave of cold and famine, while their neighbours, relations, and friends pity and despise as they pass the comfortless and unhospitable door) scruple not to be profusely expensive in dress, furniture, building, equipage, at public entertainments, in excursions to Bath, Tunbridge, or Brighthelmstone. To feed the fashionable extravagance, they rob themselves of indulgences which they know to be more truly satisfactory; for which of them returneth from the midnight assembly, or from the sum-

mer

mer excursions, without complaining of dulness, fatigue, ennui, and insipidity? They have shewn themselves, they have seen many fine persons, and many fine things, but have they felt the delicious pleasures of domestic peace, the tranquil delights of social intercourse at their own towns and villages, the solid satisfactions of a cool collected mind, the comforts arising from a disembarrassed state of finances, and the love and respect of a neighbourhood?

To run in debt, and be involved in danger of arrests and imprisonment, are, in this age, almost an object of fashionable ambition. To have an execution in the house, is to be in the same predicament with this baronet, and the other lord, or with his grace the duke. The poor imitator of splendid misery, little greatness, and titled infamy, risques his liberty and last shilling to become a man of taste and fashion. He boasts that he is a happy man, for he is a man of pleasure; he knows how to enjoy life; he professes the important science called the *Sçavoir Vivre*. Give him the distinction which, in the littleness and blindness of his soul, he considers as the source of happiness and honour. Allow him his claim to taste, give him the title of a man of pleasure, and since he insists upon it, grant him his pretensions to *Sçavoir Vivre*. But at the same time he cannot deny that he is hunted by his creditors, that he is obliged to hide himself, lest he should lose his liberty; that he is eating the bread and the meat, and wearing the clothes of those whose children are crying for a morsel, and shivering in rags. If he has brought himself to such a state as to feel no uneasiness, when he reflects on his embarrassment, and its consequences to others; he is a base, worthless, and degenerate wretch. But if he is uneasy, where is his happiness? where are his exalted enjoyments? how much happier had been this boaster of happiness, had he lived within the limits of reason, duty, and his fortune, in love and unity with his own regular family, at his own fire-side, beloved, trusted, respected in the neighbourhood, afraid of no creditor or persecution, nor of any thing else, but of doing wrong? He might not indeed have made a figure on the turf; he might not have

have had the honour of leading the fashion; but he would probably have had health, wealth, fame, and peace. Many a man who is seldom seen, and never heard of, enjoys, in the silence and security of a private life, all which this sublunary state can afford to sweeten the cup, and to lighten the burthen.

In things of an inferior nature, and such as are not immediately connected with moral conduct, the same predilection for external appearance, and the same neglect of solid comfort, when placed in competition with the display of an affected taste, are found to prevail. Our houses are often rendered cold, small, and inconvenient, for the sake of preserving a regularity of external figure, or of copying the architecture of a warmer climate. Our carriages are made dangerous or incommodious, for the sake of attracting the passengers eye, by something new or singular in their shape, strength, or fabric. Our dress is fashioned in uneasy forms, and with troublesome superfluities, or uncomfortable defects, just as the Proteus, Fashion, issues out the capricious edicts of a variable taste. We even eat and drink, see and hear, not according to our own appetites and senses, but as the prevalent taste happens to direct. In this refined age we are all persons of taste, from the hair-dresser and millener, to the duke and duchess. The question is not what is right, prudent, pleasing, comfortable, but what is the taste. Hence beggarly finery, and lordly beggary.

The sacrifice of comfort to taste is visible in our modern gardens. I rejoice in the explosion of the Dutch manner. I expatiate with raptured eye and imagination over the noble scenes created by a Kent and a Brown. But at the same time I lament that our cold climate often renders the sublime and magnificent taste in gardening incompatible with comfort. Winter, as the poet says, often lingers in the lap of May. How pleasing to step out of the house, and bask under a sunny wall covered with bloom, to watch the expansion of a rose-bud, and to see even the humble pea and bean shooting up with all the vigour of vernal fertility! But now the mansion house stands naked and forlorn. You descend from the flight of steps. You are saluted by the

the rudeſt breath of Eurus and Boreas. No trees, no walls, no out-houſes, even the kitchen and offices ſubterraneous. Not a corner to ſeek the genial warmth of a meridian ſun. Fine proſpects indeed all around! But you cannot ſtay to look at them. You fly to your chimney corner, happy if the perſecuting blaſt purſues you not to your laſt receſs. We allow all that taſte can claim. We admire and love her beauties; but they are dearly bought at the expence of comfort.

A little and encloſed garden adds greatly to the real enjoyment of a rural retreat. Though taſte has thrown down the walls, and laid all open; I venture to predict that before the lapſe of half a century, good ſenſe and the love of comfort will rebuild them. The grounds beyond may ſtill be laid out in the grandeſt and moſt beautiful ſtyle; but let the houſe ſtand in the midſt of a little cultivated ſpot, where every vegetable beauty and delicacy may be diſplayed, and where the rigours of our inclement clime may be ſoftened with elegant encloſures. The contraſt between this, which I would call the domeſtic, and the other which might be named the outer garden, or the grove, would produce an effect by no means unpleaſing. They who have no taſte for flowers, and the thouſand beauties of an incloſed garden, are but pretenders to any kind of taſte in the graces of horticulture.

Indeed, ſuch is the nature of man, we commonly advance improvement to the verge of impropriety. We now loath the idea of a ſtraight line, and a regular row of trees. But let us not, in the pride of our hearts, flatter ourſelves with the unerring rectitude of our taſte. Many of the ancients who poſſeſſed the beſt taſte, not only in poetry and eloquence, but in arts, in painting, ſculpture, architecture, were great admirers of plantations perfectly regular, and laid out in quincunxes. However vanity and faſhion may dictate and declaim, the world will not always believe that Homer, Virgil, Cyrus, Cicero, Bacon, and Temple, were totally miſtaken in their ideas of horticultural beauty.

Cicero informs us, in a fine quotation from Xenophon's economics, that when Lyſander came to Cyrus, a prince equally diſtinguiſhed for his glorious empire

pire and his genius, Cyrus ſhewed him a piece of ground *well encloſed and completely planted.* After the viſitor had admired the tall and ſtraight trees, and the rows regularly formed in a quincunx, and the ground clear of weeds, and well cultivated, and the ſweetneſs of the odours which exhaled from the flowers, he could not help expreſſing his admiration not only of the diligence, but the ſkill of him by whom all this was meaſured and marked out; upon which Cyrus anſwered, "It was myſelf who *meaſured* every thing, "the *rows* of trees are of my diſpoſing, the plan is "mine, and many of the trees were planted with my "own hand." An illuſtrious pattern, which I hope our Engliſh noblemen and gentlemen will not be afraid to follow. Why always employ a profeſſed plan-maker? Why ſacrifice their own amuſement and inclination to the will of another, and to the imperious edicts of capricious faſhion?

No. CLIX. ON THE EXAMPLE OF HENRY THE FIFTH, AND THE OPINION THAT A PROFLIGATE YOUTH IS LIKELY TO TERMINATE IN A WISE MANHOOD.

THERE are thoſe who conſider early profligacy as a mark of that ſpirit, which ſeldom fails to produce in the ſubſequent periods of life, a wiſe and a virtuous character. The example of Henry the fifth is often cited in confirmation of their opinion. Shakeſpeare has indeed repreſented his errors and reformation in ſo amiable a light, that many are not diſpleaſed when they ſee a young man beginning his career in riot and debauchery. While there is an appearance of ſpirit, they regard not the vice.

The example of Henry the fifth has been applied particularly to heirs apparent of a crown. If the future king is found to be early initiated in the exceſſes of ſenſuality, it is a favourable preſage, and we are referred

referred to the example of Falſtaff's Hal. If he devote his time to drinking, and be actually involved in continual intoxication, it is all the better, for do we not recollect Hal's exploits at the Boar's Head in Eaſtcheap? Dame Quickly, Doll Tearſheet, are illuſtrious inſtances to prove what company a prince ſhould keep in order to become hereafter a great king. It is in the haunts of intemperance and vice, and in the company of ſycophants and knaves, that he is, according to the vulgar phraſe, to ſow his wild oats, to ſpend the exuberance of his ſpirit, to ſubdue the ebullition of his blood, and to acquire a valuable ſpecies of moral experience.

It is true, indeed, that Henry the fifth is a remarkable inſtance of early profligacy and ſubſequent reformation. He is a remarkable, becauſe he is a rare inſtance. For one who ſucceeds as he did, a thouſand become either incurable debauchees, drunkards, and rogues, ruin their character and fortunes, or die under the operation of ſo rough an experiment. We hear not of thoſe who are obliged to go to the Eaſt Indies, to hide themſelves on the Continent, to ſkulk in the garrets of blind allies, to ſpend their days in goals, or are early carried to the church-yard, amidſt the thanks and rejoicings of their friends for ſo happy a deliverance from ſhame and ruin. But if one wild youth becomes but a tolerably good man, we are ſtruck with the metamorphoſis, as we are with every thing uncommon. We exaggerate his goodneſs, by comparing it with his previous depravity. We cite the example, as a conſolatory topic, wherever we behold a young man, as the ſcripture beautifully expreſſes it, walking in the ways of his own heart, and in the ſight of his own eyes. We talk as if we almoſt congratulated a parent, when his ſon has ſpirit enough to violate, not only the rules of decency, but alſo the moſt ſacred laws of morality and religion.

Such fatal ideas have broken the heart of many a virtuous and feeling father. They have brought his hairs, before they were grey, to the grave. I have been much pleaſed with a paſſage in the ſermons of the late worthy Dr. Ogden, in which he recommends regularity and virtue to young men ſolely for the ſake of their parents.

rents. "Stop, young man, ſays he, ſtop a little to "look towards thy poor parents. Think it not too "much to beſtow a moment's reflection on thoſe who "never forget thee. Recollect what they have done "for thee. Remember all—all indeed thou canſt "not; alas! ill had been thy lot, had not their care "begun, before thou couldſt remember or know any "thing.

"Now ſo proud, ſelf-willed, inexorable, then "couldſt thou only aſk by wailing, and move them "with thy tears. And they were moved. Their "hearts were touched with thy diſtreſs; they relieved "and watched thy wants before thou kneweſt thine "own neceſſities, or their kindneſs. They cloathed "thee; thou kneweſt not that thou waſt naked: thou "aſkedſt not for bread; but they fed thee. And "ever ſince—for the particulars are too many to be "recounted, and too many ſurely to be all utterly for-"gotten, it has been the very principal endeavour, "employment, and ſtudy of their lives to do ſervice "unto thee. If by all theſe endeavours they can ob-"tain their child's comfort, they arrive at the full ac-"compliſhment of their wiſhes. They have no higher "object of their ambition. Be thou but happy, and "they are ſo.

"And now tell me, is not ſomething to be done, I "do not now ſay for thyſelf, but for them? If it be "too much to deſire of thee to be good, and wiſe, and "virtuous, and happy for thy own ſake; yet be happy "for theirs. Think that a ſober, upright, and let "me add, religious life, beſides the bleſſings it will "bring upon thy own head, will be a fountain of "unfeigned comfort to thy declining parents, and "make the heart of the aged ſing for joy.

"What ſhall we ſay? which of theſe is happier? "the ſon that maketh a glad father? or the father "bleſſed with ſuch a ſon?

"Fortunate young man! who haſt an heart open ſo "early to virtuous delights, and canſt find thy own "happineſs in returning thy father's bleſſing upon his "own head!

"And

"And happy father! whose years have been prolonged, not, as it often happens, to see his comforts "fall from him one after another, and to become at once old and destitute; but to taste a new "pleasure, not to be found among the pleasures of "youth, reserved for his age; to reap the harvest of "all his cares and labours, in the duty, affection, and "felicity of his dear child. His very look bespeaks the "inward satisfaction of his heart. The infirmities of "his age sit light on him. He feels not the troubles "of life: he smiles at the approach of death; sees "himself still living and honoured in the memory and "the person of his son, his other dearer self; and "passes down to the receptacle of all the living, in the "fulness of content and joy.

"How unlike to this, is the condition of him, who "has the affliction to be the father of a wicked off-"spring! poor, unhappy man! No sorrow is like "unto thy sorrow. Diseases and death are blessings, "if compared with the anguish of thy heart, when "thou seest thy dear children run heedlessly and head-"long in the ways of sin, forgetful of their parents "counsel, and their own happiness. Unfortunate old "man! How often does he wish he had never been "born, or had been cut off before he was a father! "No reflection is able to afford him consolation. He "grows old betimes; and the afflictions of age are "doubled on his head. In vain are instruments of "pleasure brought forth. His soul refuses comfort. "Every blessing of his life is lost upon him. No success "is able to give him joy. His triumphs are like that "of David: while his friends, captains, soldiers, were "rending the air with shouts of victory—he, poor con-"queror, went up, as it is written, to the chamber "over the gate and wept: and as he went, thus he "said; O, my son Absalom! my son, my son Absa-"lom! would to God I had died for thee! O Absa-"lom, my son, my son!"

I have introduced this passage, with a hope that gay and thoughtless young men may be properly affected by it; and though they should have no regard for themselves, that they should be led to have pity on their

poor

poor parents, and to chuſe the right way, that they may not cauſe affliction to him who often has dandled them in his arms, nor to her at whoſe breaſt they hung in the ſweet and innocent period of their infancy. It is indeed a melancholy conſideration that children, who have been the delight of their parents during the earlier ages, no ſooner arrive at maturity, than they often prove a ſcourge and a curſe. They hurry thoſe out of the world, who brought them into it. They embitter the old age of thoſe who devoted the health and ſtrength of manhood to their welfare and ſupport. Sad return! to plant the pillow of reclining age with thorns! —O have pity, have pity on your father—behold him with tottering ſtep approaching you! With ſuppliant hands and tears in his eyes, he begs you—to do what? to be good and happy. O ſpare him, wipe away his tears; make him happy, be ſo yourſelf—ſo when it ſhall be your turn to be a father, may you never feel the pangs you have already inflicted!

There are parents, indeed, who ſeem to have little concern but for the pecuniary intereſt or worldly advancement of their children. While their children excel in dreſs, addreſs, ſimulation, and diſſimulation, they are allowed to be as debauched and immoral as they pleaſe. While they poſſeſs a poor, mean, and contemptible kind of wiſdom, commonly called the knowledge of the world, their parents are perfectly eaſy; though they ſhould be notoriouſly guilty of every baſe artifice, and plunged in the groſſeſt and moſt unlawful ſpecies of ſenſuality. That poor man, Lord Cheſterfield, was one of thoſe parents who are ready to ſacrifice their children's honour, conſcience, and ſalvation, for the ſake of gaining a little of the little honours and riches of the world, where not even the higheſt honours of the moſt abundant riches are comparable to the poſſeſſion of an honeſt heart. That wretched Lord ſeems to have entertained very little natural affection for his ſpurious offſpring. His paternal attention was all avarice and ambition. He would probably have been delighted if his ſon had been at an early age a remarkable debauchee. He would have thought the ſpirit which vice diſplayed, a ſure prognoſtic

noſtic of future eminence. Providence defeated his purpoſe, and permitted his letters to be exhibited as a loathſome monument of wickedneſs, vanity, and worldly wiſdom. Such wiſdom is indeed uſually folly, even where its effects and conſequences are confined to the preſent period of exiſtence.

Every father then, and every mother who deſerves that tender and venerable appellation, will ſtrenuouſly endeavour, whatever have been their own errors and vices, to preſerve thoſe whom they have introduced into a troubleſome world, from the foul contagion and pollution of vice. If they have any regard for their children, for their country, for themſelves, they will uſe every probable means to reſcue the riſing generation from early profligacy. Selfiſh motives often prevail when all others are inefficacious. I repeat then, that, for their own ſakes, they muſt guard their offspring from riot, intemperance, and prodigality. If they are miſguided by the example of Henry the Fifth, or any other reformed rake, ſo as to encourage their children in evil, or even to be negligent of them, they will probably repent in the day of old age, and find poverty, ſhame, and anguiſh, ſuperadded to the weight of years, and the unavoidable evils of natural decay.

No. CLX. A GOOD HEART NECESSARY TO ENJOY THE BEAUTIES OF NATURE.

BY a juſt diſpenſation of Providence, it happens that they who are unreaſonably ſelfiſh, ſeldom enjoy ſo much happineſs as the generous and contented. Almoſt all the wicked deviate from the line of rectitude, that they may engroſs an extraordinary portion of ſome real or imaginary advantage. Their hearts are agitated in the purſuits of it with the moſt violent and painful emotions, and their eagerneſs, apprehenſions, and ſolicitude, poiſon the enjoyment after they have obtained the poſſeſſion. The nature of their pleaſures is at beſt groſs, ſenſual, violent, and tranſitory. They are always

always diſſatisfied, always envious, always malignant. Their ſouls are bent down to the earth; and, deſtitute of all elevated and heavenly ideas, *cæleſtium inanes*. They have not powers of perception for the ſublime or refined ſatisfactions; and are no leſs inſenſible to the tranquil delights of innocence and ſimplicity, than the deaf and blind to the beauty of colours, and the melody of muſic.

To the wicked, and indeed to all who are warmly engaged in the vulgar purſuits of the world, the contemplation of rural ſcenes, and of the manners and natures of animals, is perfectly inſipid. The odour of flowers, the purling of ſtreams, the ſong and plumage of birds, the ſportive innocence of the lamb, the fidelity of the dog, are incapable of attracting, for one moment, the notice of him whoſe conſcience is uneaſy, and paſſions are unſubdued. Invite him to a morning walk through a neighbouring wood, and he begs to be excuſed; for he loves his pillow, and can ſee no charms in trees. Endeavour to allure him, on a vernal evening, when, after a ſhower, every leaf breathes fragrance and freſhneſs, to ſaunter with you in the garden; and he pleads an engagement at whiſt, or at the bottle. Bid him liſten to the thruſh, the blackbird, the nightingale, the woodlark, and he interrupts you by aſking the price of ſtocks, and enquiring whether the Weſt-India fleet is arrived. As you walk over the meadows enamelled with cowſlips and daiſies, he takes no other notice, but enquires who is the owner, how much the land lets for an acre, what hay ſold for at the laſt market. He prefers the gloomieſt day in November, on which pecuniary buſineſs is tranſacted, or a feaſt celebrated, or a public diverſion afforded, to all the delights of the merry month of May. He who is conſtantly engaged in gratifying his luſt, or in gaming, becomes in a ſhort time ſo very wiſe, as to conſider the ſtudy of the works of God in the creation, and the external beauty both of vegetable and animated nature, as little ſuperior to a childiſh entertainment. How grave his aſpect! No Solon ever looked ſo ſapient as he does, when he is on the point of making a bet, or inſidiouſly plotting an intrigue. One might conclude, from his air of importance, that man was born to ſhake the dice, to ſhuffle the cards, to drink claret,

claret, and to deſtroy, by debauchery, the innocence of individuals, and the peace of families. Ignorant and miſtaken wretch! He knows not that purity and ſimplicity of heart would furniſh him with delights, which, while they render his life tranquil and pleaſurable, would enable him to reſign his ſoul at death into the hands of his Maker unpolluted. What ſtains and filth it uſually contracts by an indiſcriminate commerce with the world! how comparatively pure amidſt the genuine pleaſures of a rural philoſophical life!

As a preſervative of innocence, and as the means of a moſt agreeable paſtime, the love of birds, flowers, plants, trees, gardens, animals, when it appears in boys, as indeed it uſually does, ſhould be encouraged, and in a ſubordinate degree cultivated. Farewell, innocence, when ſuch things ceaſe to be capable of affording pleaſure! The heart gradually becomes hardened and corrupted, when its objects are changed to thoſe of a worldly and a ſenſual nature.

Man may indeed be amuſed in the days of health and vigour with the common purſuits of ordinary life; but they have too much agitation in them for the feeble powers of old age. Amuſements are then required which are gentle, yet healthy; capable of engaging the thoughts, yet requiring no painful or continued exertion. Happy he who has acquired and preſerved to that age a taſte for ſimple pleaſures. A fine day, a beautiful garden, a flowery field, are to him enjoyments ſimilar in ſpecies and degree to the bliſs of Elyſium. A farm yard, with all its inhabitants, conſtitutes a moſt delightful ſcene, and furniſhes him with a thouſand entertaining ideas. The man who can ſee without pleaſure a hen gather her chickens under her wing, or the train of ducklings following their parent into a pond, is like him who has no muſic in his ſoul, and who, according to Shakeſpeare, is fit for treaſons, murders, every thing that can diſgrace and degrade humanity. *Vetabo iiſdem ſub trabibus, fragilemque mecum ſolvat phaſelum.* I will forbid him, ſays Horace on another occaſion, to be under the ſame roof with me, or to embark in the ſame veſſel.

Let

Let it operate as an additional motive in ſtimulating us to preſerve our innocence, that with our innocence we preſerve our ſenſibility to the charms of nature. It is indeed one of the rewards of innocence, that it is enabled to taſte the pureſt pleaſure which this world can beſtow, without the uſual conſequences of pleaſures, remorſe and ſatiety. The man of a bad heart can find no delight but in bad deſigns and bad actions—nominal joys and real torments. His very amuſements are of neceſſity connected with the injury of others, and with a thouſand painful ſenſations which no language can expreſs. But the mind of the honeſt, ſimple and ingenuous, is always gay and enlivened, like ſome of the ſouthern climates, with a ſerenity almoſt perpetual. Let a man who would form an adequate idea on the different ſtates of the good and bad heart, with reſpect to happineſs, compare the climate of Otaheite with that of Terra del Fuego, as deſcribed by our Britiſh circumnavigators.

No. CLXI. ON THE PECULIAR BASENESS OF VICE IN NOBILITY.

MANY, who have been raiſed to titles and eſtates by the virtue or good fortune of their anceſtors, ſeem to conſider themſelves as privileged to infringe all the common reſtraints eſtabliſhed by a regard to decency, by moral philoſophy, by natural and by revealed religion. They have noble blood in their veins, therefore they preſume that the world was made for them to take their paſtime in it. Who, they exclaim (with a volley of oaths and execrations) who ſhall dare to ſay to us, thus far ſhall ye go, and no farther? Rules, laws and *modes* of *ſuperſtition* were made for the canaille, for the muſhroom race, who ſprang from dunghills, and on whom the ſun of royalty has never ſhed its luſtre. Scarcely any of the ancient philoſophers could boaſt of this noble blood, and ſhall they preſume to dictate to a nobleman, that is, perhaps, to a baſtard of King Charles's ſtrumpet,

ſtrumpet, or to the diſeaſed offſpring of a leprous, ſcrophulous, ſorry race of puiſne lordlings, whoſe names are only recorded in the books of ruined tradeſmen, and whoſe illuſtrious exploits are limited to the regions of a cock-pit, a horſe-race, a tavern, and a bawdy houſe? Shall a carpenter's ſon dictate to a Fitzroy? His lordſhip pleads his privileges. Let him riot in debauchery, ſeduce innocence, break the peace of private families, laugh at all that is ſacred and ſerious, for is he not a duke?

You are indeed a duke; or, in other words, your great-grandfather, by good luck or good deeds, acquired for you that noble old manſion-houſe, that park, thoſe woods, thoſe lands, thoſe titles, all of which you baſely diſhonour. Though in your appearance you have not much of ducal dignity, yet we ſee your ducal coronet on your proſtitute's vis-à-vis: we ſee you glorying in your ſhame, neglecting to pay your tradeſmen, yet laviſhing your gold on horſes and harlots; ſtooping to the meaneſt company and diverſions, yet retaining all the petty inſolence of family pride: we ſee you meanly ſneaking in a court; we ſee you rewarded, notwithſtanding the infamy of your private life, with offices of truſt and honour; we therefore acknowledge that you have all the common attributes and outward ſigns of the title which you happen to inherit. You have alſo had the honour of a divorce, and enjoy the envied and brilliant reputation of a profeſſed adulterer. With a character and qualities ſo noble, every Briton muſt acknowledge how juſtly you are ſaluted by the appellation of your Grace! how juſtly you are made the companion of a prince, and the privy counſellor of the king of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, *defender of the faith*, and over all cauſes, *eccleſiaſtical* as well as civil, ſupreme! But, irony apart, who can be ſurprized, or who can lament, when ſuch wretches as yourſelf are the counſellors of kings, that the ſubjects rebel, and that the empire is diſmembered? Under a ruler like you, who would not glory in the illuſtrious character and conduct of a Waſhington?

When we read the liſt of dukes, marquiſes, earls, viſcounts, barons, and baronets, exhibited in the Court Calendar,

Calendar, we cannot help wondering at the great number of thoſe who are ſunk in obſcurity, or branded with infamy; and at the extreme paucity of characters to which may be applied with juſtice the epithets of decent, virtuous, learned, and devout. Here we ſee a long liſt of titled ſhadows, whoſe names are ſeldom heard, and whoſe perſons are ſeldom ſeen but at Newmarket and the chocolate-houſe. There we mark a tribe whom fame has celebrated for thoſe feats of gallantry called in an old-faſhioned book, adultery. Here we point out a wretch ſtigmatized for unnatural crimes, there a blood-thirſty duelliſt. Debauchees, drunkards, ſpendthrifts, gameſters, tyrannical neighbours, and bad maſters of families, occur to the mind of the reader ſo frequently, that they almoſt ceaſe by familiarity to excite his animadverſion. All this may be true, it will be ſaid; but will it not be true of any other equal number of men? I venture to affirm that it will not. The power, rank, and opulence of the nobility, added to bad company and often to a bad education, lead them beyond the line of common depravity. There is this alſo which diſtinguiſhes their errors from the uſual errors of human infirmity; they boaſt of their enormities, and glory in their diſgrace: exorbitant profligacy is conſidered as a mark of manly ſpirit; and all who are decent and regular, are ridiculed by the majority as tame, puſillanimous, hypocritical, ſuperſtitious, methodiſtical, prejudiced, or narrow-minded.

But allowing, what experience refutes, that the enormities of the nominal great are not worſe than thoſe of others, yet it cannot be denied that their influence on the community is infinitely more detrimental. The greater part of mankind are weak and ill-educated; but to a feeble and ill-informed underſtanding, riches and titles appear to be the nobleſt diſtinctions of human nature. Whatever is ſaid or done by the poſſeſſors of them, operate both as precepts and examples with irreſiſtible force. It is ſufficient, in the opinion of many a ſilly man and woman of faſhion, to juſtify any eccentricity of behaviour, that a lord or a lady, whom they proudly name among their acquaintance, has ſet the example. Deformity itſelf, aukwardneſs, rudeneſs,

become grace and politeneſs, when exhibited by ſome ducheſs who affects fame by an impudent ſingularity. The court in Doctors-Commons affords frequent inſtances, in the preſent times, that vices, directly repugnant to the law of God, pregnant with injuries to ſociety, and fatal to private virtue and private happineſs, are become faſhionable. It is a pride and pleaſure among the blaſted lordlings of the day, to ſtand forth in a court of juſtice, and avow themſelves the deſtroyers of female virtue and nuptial felicity. They are travelled men; and like true patriots, emulating the manners of that nation which is endeavouring to deſtroy our political exiſtence, they attempt to introduce the looſe principles of conjugal libertiniſm into their own country. Thoſe who have not travelled, imitate the noble youth who have; and thus is the ſweet cup of domeſtic felicity almoſt univerſally embittered among thoſe who, in the regions of faſhion, pretend to ſuperior ſkill in the art of enjoying life.

No. CLXII. ON AFFECTATION OF EXTREME DELICACY AND SENSIBILITY.

EXTREME DELICACY, ſo eſteemed at preſent, ſeems to have been unknown in times of remote antiquity. It is certainly a great refinement on human nature; and refinements are never attended to in the earlier ages, when the occupations of war, and the wants of unimproved life, leave little opportunity, and leſs inclination, for fanciful enjoyments. Danger and diſtreſs require ſtrength of mind, and neceſſarily exclude an attention to thoſe delicacies, which, while they pleaſe, infallibly enervate.

That tenderneſs which is amiable in a ſtate of perfect civilization, is deſpiſed as a weakneſs among unpoliſhed nations. Shocked at the ſmalleſt circumſtances which are diſagreeable, it cannot ſupport the idea of danger and alarm. So far from exerciſing the ſeverities which are ſometimes politically neceſſary in a rude ſtate, it ſtarts

ſtarts with horror from the ſight, and at the deſcription of them It delights in the calm occupations of rural life, and would gladly reſign the ſpear and the ſhield for the ſhepherd's crook and the lover's garland. But in an unformed community, where conſtant danger requires conſtant defence, thoſe diſpoſitions which delight in eaſe and retirement will be treated with general contempt; and no temper of mind which is deſpiſed will be long epidemical.

The antient Greeks and Romans were the moſt civilized people on the earth. They, however, were unacquainted with that extreme delicacy of ſentiment which is become univerſally prevalent in modern times. Perhaps ſome reaſonable cauſes may be aſſigned. The ſtoic philoſophy endeavoured to introduce a total apathy, and though it was not embraced in all its rigour by the vulgar, yet it had a ſufficient number of votaries to diffuſe a general inſenſibility of temper. It perhaps originally meant no more than to teach men to govern their affections by the dictates of reaſon, but as a natural want of feeling produced the ſame effects as a rational regulation of the paſſions, inſenſibility ſoon paſſed among the vulgar, for what it had no claim to, a philoſophical indifference.

That reſpectful attention to women, which in modern times is called gallantry, was not to be found among the antients. Women were unjuſtly conſidered as inferior beings, whoſe only duty was to contribute to pleaſure, and to ſuperintend domeſtic œconomy. It was not till the days of chivalry that men ſhewed that deſire of pleaſing the ſofter ſex, which ſeems to allow them a ſuperiority. This deference to women refines the manners and ſoftens the temper; and it is no wonder that the antients, who admitted not women to their ſocial converſations, ſhould acquire a roughneſs of manners incompatible with Delicacy of Sentiment.

Men who acted, thought and ſpoke, like the antients, were unqueſtionably furniſhed by nature with every feeling in great perfection. But their mode of education contributed rather to harden, than to mollify their hearts. Politics and war were the only general objects of purſuit. Ambition, it is well known, renders all

other paſſions ſubſervient to itſelf; and the youth who had been accuſtomed to military diſcipline, and had endured the hardſhips of a campaign, though he might yield to the allurements of pleaſure, would not have time to attend to the refinements of delicacy. But the modern ſoldier, in the preſent mode of conducting war, is not compelled to undergo many perſonal hardſhips either in the preparation for his profeſſion, or in the exerciſe of it. Commerce, but little known to many antient nations, gives the moderns an opportunity of acquiring opulence without much difficulty or danger; and the infinite numbers who inherit this opulence, have recourſe, in order to paſs away life with eaſe, to the various arts of exciting pleaſure. The profeſſions of divinity and law, leave ſufficient time, opportunity, and inclination to moſt of their profeſſors to purſue every innocent amuſement and gratification. The general plan of modern education, which among the liberal conſiſts of the ſtudy of poets and ſentimental writers, contributes perhaps more than all other cauſes to humanize the heart and refine the ſentiments: for at the period when education is commenced, the heart is moſt ſuſceptible of impreſſions.

Whatever diſpoſition tends to ſoften, without weakening the mind, muſt be cheriſhed; and it muſt be allowed that an unaffected Delicacy of Sentiment, on this ſide the extreme, adds greatly to the happineſs of mankind, by diffuſing an univerſal benevolence. It teaches men to feel for others as for themſelves; it diſpoſes them to rejoice with the happy, and by partaking to encreaſe their pleaſure. It frequently excludes the malignant paſſions, which are the ſources of the greateſt miſery in life. It excites a pleaſing ſenſation in our own breaſt, which, if its duration be conſidered, may be placed among the higheſt gratifications of ſenſe. The only ill conſequence that can be apprehended from it is, an effeminacy of mind, which may diſqualify us for vigorous purſuits and manly exertions.

In the moſt ſucceſsful courſe of things, obſtacles will impede, and diſagreeable circumſtances diſguſt. To bear theſe without feeling them, is ſometimes neceſſary in the right conduct of life: but he who is tremblingly alive

alive all over, and whose sensibility approaches to soreness, avoids the contest in which he knows he must be hurt. He feels injuries never committed, and resents affronts never intended. Disgusted with men and manners, he either seeks retirement to indulge his melancholy, or, weakened by continual chagrin, conducts himself with folly and imprudence.

How then shall we avoid the extreme of a disposition, which in the due medium is productive of the most salutary consequences? In this excess, as well as all others, reason must be called in to moderate. Sensibility must not be permitted to sink us into such a state of indolence, as effectually represses those manly sentiments, which may very well consist with the most delicate. The greatest mildness is commonly united with the greatest fortitude, in the true hero. Tenderness joined with resolution, forms indeed a finished character, to which reason, co-operating with nature, may easily attain.

The affectation of great sensibility is extremely common. It is however as odious as the reality is amiable. It renders a man detestable, and a woman ridiculous. Instead of relieving the afflicted, which is the necessary effect of genuine sympathy, a character of this sort flies from misery, to shew that it is too delicate to support the sight of distress. The appearance of a toad, or the jolting of a carriage, will cause a paroxysm of fear. It pretends to a superior share of refinement and philanthropy. But it is remarkable, that this delicacy and tenderness often disappear in solitude, and the pretender to uncommon sensibility is frequently found, in the absence of witnesses, to be uncommonly unfeeling.

To have received a tender heart from the hand of nature, is to have received the means of the highest enjoyment. To have guided its emotions by the dictates of reason, is to have acted up to the dignity of man, and to have obtained that happiness of which the heart was constituted susceptible. May a temper, thus laudable in itself, never be rendered contemptible by affectation, or injurious to its possessor and to others, through the want of a proper guidance.

No. CLXIII. ON TRUE PATIENCE, AS DISTINGUISHED FROM INSENSIBILITY.

HOWEVER common, and however intenſe the evils of human life may be, certain it is, that evils equally great, do not affect all men with an equal degree of anguiſh; and the different manner of ſuſtaining evils, ariſes from one of theſe two cauſes, a natural inſenſibility, or an adventitious fortitude, acquired by the exertion of the virtue of PATIENCE.

Apathus, when a ſchool-boy, was not remarkable for quickneſs of apprehenſion, or brilliancy of wit; but though his progreſs was ſlow, it was ſure, and the additional opportunities of ſtudy, which he enjoyed by being free from thoſe avocations which vivacity and warmth of conſtitution occaſion, made him a tolerably good ſcholar. The ſullenneſs of his deportment, however, alienated the affections of his teachers; and, upon the ſlighteſt miſdemeanours, he often underwent the puniſhment of the rod, which he always bore without a tear, and without complaint.

He had not long been at ſchool, before his father and mother died of a contagious fever. Preparatory to the diſcloſure of ſo mournful an event to an orphan ſon, many precautions were taken, many phraſes of condolence ſtudied. At length, the maſter took him aſide, and after ſeveral obſervations on the inſtability of human affairs, the ſuddenneſs of death, the neceſſity of ſubmiſſion to Providence, and the inefficacy of ſorrow, told him, that his parents were no more. To this, young Apathus replied, by obſerving, without any viſible alteration in his countenance, that he ſuſpected ſomething of that kind had happened, as he had not received his letters at the uſual time; but that he had not ſaid any thing on the ſubject, as he thought his being poſſeſſed of a fine fortune by the event, was a matter that concerned nobody but himſelf: "For (ſays he) as the death was "ſudden, there probably was no will, and my father "being pretty warm, as they call it, and I being an "only ſon, I think I ſhall be very well off." Here he

was

was interrupted by his master, who was now desirous of some degree of that grief which he had before been solicitous to prevent.—"And are you not affected "(said he) with the loss of the dearest friends you had "in the world?" "Why, Sir, (replied the insensible) "you have just now been teaching me to submit to "Providence, and telling me, we must all die, and "the like; and do I not practise your precepts?" The master was too much astonished to be able to answer, and hastily left the young man; who probably concluded the day with a feast of gingerbread, or a game at marbles.

Soon after he left school, he took it into his head to enter into the state of matrimony. But here let the gentle reader be informed, that he was not induced to submit his neck to the yoke by any of those fine feelings which constitute love. The object of his choice had ten thousand pounds; and he considered that ten thousand pounds would pay for the lady's board. When the little prattlers were arrived at the age when none can behold them without pleasure, they were seized with an unfavourable small-pox, and severally carried from the cradle to the grave. The constant attendance of the mother, on this occasion, brought on a fever, which together with a weakness occasioned by an advanced state of pregnancy, proved fatal. Then, at last, Apathus was observed to fetch a sigh, and lift up his hands to heaven—at the sight of the undertaker's bill. A thousand misfortunes in business have fallen to his lot, all which he has borne with seeming fortitude. He is now, at length, reduced to that state, in which gentlemen choose to take lodgings within the purlieus of St. George's fields: but there is no alteration in his features; he still sings his song, takes his glass, and laughs at those silly mortals who weary themselves in wandering up and down the world without controul.

Thus Apathus affords a striking instance of that power of bearing afflictions which arises from natural insensibility. Stoicus will give us a better idea of Patience as a virtue.

From that period at which the mind begins to think, Stoicus was remarkable for a quality, which, in children,

ren, is called ſhamefacedneſs. He could never enter a room full of company without ſhewing his diſtreſs, by a violent ſuffuſion of bluſhes. At ſchool, he avoided the commiſſion of faults, rather through fear of ſhame than of puniſhment. In ſhort, an exquiſite ſenſibility, at the ſame time that it gave him the moſt exalted delight, frequently expoſed him to the keeneſt affliction. Thus, from being acquainted with grief, though a ſtranger to misfortune, he acquired a habit of bearing evils before any heavy ones befel him.

Stoicus was deſigned for a literary life, which, to the generality of mankind, appears almoſt exempt from the common attacks of ill-fortune: but if there were no other inſtances of the peculiar miſeries of the ſtudent, Stoicus alone might evince the groundleſſneſs of ſuch an opinion. From a ſanguine temper, he was prone to anticipate ſucceſs; and from an enterprizing diſpoſition, was little inclined to ſit down contented without a conſiderable ſhare of reputation. Influenced by his love of fame, he ventured to appeal to the public taſte, and actually ſent into the world a performance of great merit: but as the work wanted ſome popular attractions, it was ſoon neglected and ſunk into oblivion.

An evil of this kind, perhaps, the merchant or the manufacturer may treat with contempt. They, however, who, with the ſame feelings, have been in the ſame predicament, will know the anguiſh which ſecretly tormented the diſconſolate Stoicus. This diſappointment was the firſt affliction of his life, and on this he long meditated without intermiſſion. He has not again ventured to publiſh, and therefore has had no cauſe of uneaſineſs from the ingratitude of the many-headed monſter: but the evils of his private life have been numerous and afflictive beyond conception. The death of an amiable wife, a conſtant ſtate of ſickneſs, expectations continually diſappointed, have concurred to overwhelm him—but all their efforts have been fruitleſs. The reflections of philoſophy and religion fortify him againſt every attack, and I never viſit him without obſerving a placid ſmile of reſignation diffuſed on his countenance. He is ſenſible of the real weight of every evil, and at the ſame time ſuſtains it with alacrity. He draws reſources

from

from himſelf in every emergency, and with the niceſt feelings is become perfectly callous.

This is genuine Patience, and though the former may by ſome be thought a happineſs, the latter only can be eſteemed a virtue.

Senſibility, with all its inconveniences, is to be cheriſhed by thoſe who underſtand and wiſh to maintain the dignity of their nature. To feel for others, diſpoſes us to exerciſe the amiable virtue of charity, which our religion indiſpenſably requires. It conſtitutes that enlarged benevolence which philoſophy inculcates, and which is indeed comprehended in Chriſtian charity. It is the privilege and the ornament of man; and the pain which it cauſes is abundantly recompenſed by that ſweet ſenſation which ever accompanies the exerciſe of beneficence.

To feel our own miſery with full force is not to be deprecated. Affliction ſoftens and improves the heart. Tears, to ſpeak in the ſtyle of figure, fertilize the ſoil in which the virtues grow. And it is the remark of one who underſtood human nature, that the faculties of the mind, as well as the feelings of the heart, are meliorated by adverſity.

But, in order to promote theſe ends, our ſufferings muſt not be permitted to overwhelm us. We muſt oppoſe them with the arms of reaſon and religion; and to expreſs the idea in the language of the philoſopher, as well as the poet, of Nature; every one, while he is compelled to feel his misfortunes like a man, ſhould reſolve alſo to bear them like a man.

No. CLXIV. CURSORY REMARKS ON THE ELOQUENCE OF THE PULPIT. IN A LETTER.

ELOQUENCE is numbered among thoſe arts which inſtead of making a progreſſive improvement in the courſe of revolving ages, have greatly receded from their original excellence.

The funeral orations and panegyrics of a few Frenchmen, are the only pieces among the moderns

which make pretenſions to rhetorical compoſition. Theſe, however, appear very elaborate and unnatural; whether from the barrenneſs of the ſubjects, or from the weakneſs of the orators, is foreign to our purpoſe. From whatever cauſe it proceeds, it appears, that antient eloquence is not reſtored by thoſe efforts which are allowed to have been moſt ſucceſsful.

In England, ſo generally is a taſte for ſolid argument and ſubtle reaſoning diffuſed, that mere flights of imagination, when unſupported by truth and argument, are little attended to. Thus it has been ſaid, we have no truly claſſical hiſtory of our own country. Elaborate collections of facts, proceedings of parliament, and accurate deſcriptions of our navies and armaments, fill up, with a jejune detail, ſome of our moſt celebrated hiſtories. A great deal of ſagacity has, indeed, been exerted in the adjuſtment of conteſted æras, unwearied labour in illuſtrating obſcure paſſages in our annals, and much patience in the examination of our records. But where, after all, is the painting of a Livy, and the conciſe elegance of a Salluſt?

It is not therefore ſurpriſing, that a people who admit not unneceſſary embelliſhments in matters of taſte, and who can fall in love with naked truth even when ſhe is at liberty to dreſs herſelf in the garb of fancy, ſhould reject mere ornamental flouriſhes in the important tranſactions of political debate, and the ſerious proceedings of a court of judicature.

Thus the eloquence of the antients is not, perhaps, to be found either in the ſenate or the forum of Britain. There is, indeed, a very great degree of merit in many of the harangues ſpoken in thoſe places, but they come not up to the idea of Grecian or Roman eloquence. The defect however is probably not ſo much owing to a want of ability, as to a voluntary compliance with the taſte and genius of the nation.

In the pulpit, indeed, we may find ſome veſtiges of ancient oratory: but waving at preſent the enquiry, whether we reſemble the ancients in this point, I ſhall proceed to tranſcribe a few obſervations on pulpit eloquence in general, which I collected not long ago by accident.

One

One evening laſt autumn, as I was walking in the fields near the city, to enjoy a little freſh air, I obſerved a man, ſomewhat advanced in years, and of a compoſed aſpect, ſauntering in the ſame path with myſelf, ſeemingly in profound meditation. For a conſiderable time neither of us choſe to commence a converſation; till at length, when a tacit familiarity between us had removed the reſerve of ſtrangeneſs, the old man opened with an uſual introductory topic, the ſerenity of the evening. For my own part, I never refuſe to join in one of the moſt reaſonable, as well as moſt agreeable pleaſures of human life. By degrees, the ſeverity of my companion's countenance brightened up as the converſation grew warm, and he told me he had juſt been hearing an excellent ſermon at an evening lecture, and, as was his uſual way, had taken this little turn in the fields to meditate on ſerious ſubjects without interruption. I muſt own I was rather ſtartled at hearing this, apprehending I had fallen into the company of ſome methodiſtical enthuſiaſt, who would endeavour to make a proſelyte; but upon farther converſation, I found myſelf agreeably miſtaken. The old man made ſome reflections, which, as they ſtruck me at the time, I entered among my minutes as ſoon as I returned home.

"You muſt know, Sir," ſaid he, "that I am an old "faſhioned man. I go to church on Wedneſdays and "Fridays, according to my good old grandmother's "directions, who (well I remember it) uſed always to "appoint me the bearer of her large print prayer-book "bound in purple morocco. To theſe early impreſ"ſions, perhaps, I owe all my oddities; and you will "eaſily imagine what a queer fellow I am, when I in"form you, that I put my family to the inconvenience "of dining, on Sundays, a full hour ſooner than com"mon, for no other reaſon in the world but that I may "do my duty towards my Maker, by going to church "in the afternoon. While my neighbours are at the "playhouſe, or the tavern, I can make ſhift to kill "time at an evening lecture; and I often follow a "famous preacher of a charity ſermon, with all the ar"dour with which a favourite player inſpires the fre"quenters of theatrical entertainments. Theſe are

"my

" my uſual diverſions, and really, Sir, they have " ſome advantages attending them. In the firſt place, " they are not expenſive; for what is a ſhilling thrown " away now and then upon a trifling whim, ſince every " man has his hobby-horſe; ſuch as relieving a ſuffering " fellow creature, or contributing to the education and " ſupport of a poor orphan? Secondly, I can go into " any church, within the Bills of Mortality, without " danger of being puſhed, and ſqueezed, and trod " upon, and ſtifled to death, as ſometimes happens to " thoſe who follow more faſhionable diverſions; nay, " and I can ſit the whole time without being in the leaſt " overheated.

" Now, Sir, as I have conſtantly attended to various " ſorts of pulpit eloquence, I ſuppoſe I may pretend, " without vanity, to be ſome judge of it. Do not, " however, expect that I ſhall bring proofs of the juſt- " neſs of my remarks from your Ariſtotles, your Tul- " lies, or your Quintilians; for I am a plain common " man, and if I have any ſenſe, God knows it is only " plain common ſenſe.

" Let me premiſe, that I ſhall now and then make " uſe of the uſual terms of diviſion and ſubdiviſion. " Such, for inſtance, as thoſe edifying little words, " Firſt, ſecondly, thirdly, to conclude, to come to " my next head, and the like. Conſider, ſir, I have " been long uſed to this ſtyle, and naturally run into " it.

" Of preachers, I ſhall reckon four kinds; the Fine " Man, the Pretty Preacher, the Good Textman, and " the Humdrum.

" Firſt then of the firſt (forgive my ſermonical ſtyle), " namely, of the FINE MAN:

" A ſtentorophonic voice is the fundamental excel- " lence of your Fine Man, and a powerful excellence " it is. No ſooner has the Fine Man uttered the pa- " thetic and ſignificant phraſe, 'to conclude,' than I " have heard the whole row of matrons, in the middle " aiſle, with one accord cry, 'humph,' and immedi- " ately ſecond their exclamation with a torrent of tears, " which flowed down their withered cheeks, interrupt- " ed only by ſighs and ſobs. The next qualification is

" flexibility

" flexibility of muſcles. From this excellence ariſe theſe " violent contortions of the body, that wringing of " the hands, beating of the breaſt, rolling of the eyes, " foaming of the mouth, and one or two more ſymp- " toms of madneſs, which never fail to gain the ap- " plauſe of the weeping congregation. The next— " but what am I about, Sir? In truth I cannot recollect " any real excellencies; as for ſenſe, learning, argu- " ment, theſe are not to be expected in your Fine " Man: but then the want of theſe is abundantly ſup- " plied by noiſe, nonſenſe, and grimace.

" To come to my ſecond head. Secondly then, as " was before laid down, we treat of the PRETTY " PREACHER.

" The Pretty Preacher is an imitator of the Fine " Man. As a copy, he is ſomewhat fainter than the " original. He whines, he ſobs, he roars, but roars " like any nightingale, as Shakeſpeare has it. A ſoft " effeminate voice, a pretty face (for look ye, Sir, a " pretty face is a more powerful perſuaſive, than the " arguments of a Chillingworth), and a white handker- " chief, are the conſtituent parts of a Pretty Preacher.

" Theſe two ſorts of Preachers are complete maſters " of the paſſions, without in the leaſt addreſſing the un- " derſtanding. In truth, I cannot help comparing them " to a fiddler of old time, I remember to have heard " of at ſchool, who made ſtocks and ſtones dance mi- " nuets, and rivers run the wrong way, and played a " hundred ſuch pranks merely by the ſound of the " fiddle-ſtrings. Juſt in the ſame manner a Fine Man, " and a Pretty Preacher, can force the tear from the " eye, and the ſhilling from the inmoſt receſſes of the " pocket, by dint of ſound, which, in this caſe, is " never the echo of ſenſe.

" To come to my third head. Thirdly then, the " GOOD TEXTMAN lays down good plain rules of " morality, and confirms every precept by a quotation " from holy writ. The graces of elocution he never " aims at. Rhetorical flouriſhes, new remarks, or " beautiful language, are not to be required of him. " In ſhort, the intelligent part of the congregation will " ſeldom find their underſtandings enlightened, or

" their

" their fancy amuſed by him; but the plain ſober-
" minded Chriſtian, provided he can diſtinguiſh what
" the preacher ſays, may carry away ſomething for his
" edification.

" To conclude with my fourth and laſt head. The
" HUMDRUM ſeems to conſider preaching and praying
" as a kind of work, which if he performs ſo as to
" get his wages, he is ſatisfied. He reads the liturgy
" as he would read a news-paper. He endeavours
" neither to pleaſe, to ſtrike, nor to convince, but
" thinks the duty ſufficiently well done, if it is but
" done according to the rubrick, and at the eſtabliſhed
" ſeaſons. To give him his due, he commonly
" preaches the beſt divinity in the language; for as he
" is too lazy to compoſe, he has nothing to do but to
" make choice of the moſt celebrated compoſitions of
" others. He, however, murders every ſentence he
" reads. For the moſt part, he chuſes doctrinal rather
" than practical diſcourſes; but the misfortune is, that
" while he is making the myſteries as clear as the ſun
" at noon-day, his audience is commonly aſleep as faſt
" as a church. In a word, you may form ſome idea of
" this kind of Preacher, by taking a view of Hogarth's
" print of the ſleepy congregation, where there is a
" Humdrum holding forth, ſo as effectually to infuſe
" peace and quietneſs into the minds of his hearers."

Here the old man's avocations obliged him to conclude the converſation, with expreſſing a wiſh, " That men of
" virtue and learning, as the clergy generally are,
" would not let the effect of their excellent prayers and
" diſcourſes, which, if well delivered, might reform
" the world, be in a great meaſure loſt through indiffe-
" rence or affectation."

CLXV. ON THE SUPERIOR VALUE OF SOLID ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN CICERO AND LORD CHESTERFIELD.

Esse quam videri. SALL.

Cicero. MISTAKE me not. I know how to value the sweet courtesies of life. Affability, attention, decorum of behaviour, if they have not been ranked by philosophers among the virtues, are certainly related to them, and have a powerful influence in promoting social happiness. I have recommended them, as well as yourself. But I contend, and no sophistry shall prevail upon me to give up this point, that, to be truly amiable, they must proceed from goodness of heart. Assumed by the artful to serve the purposes of private interest, they degenerate to contemptible grimace, and detestable hypocrisy.

Chest. Excuse me, my dear Cicero; I cannot enter farther into the controversy at present. I have a hundred engagements at least; and see yonder my little elegant French Comptesse. I promised her and myself the pleasure of a promenade. Pleasant walking enough in these elysian groves. So much good company too, that if it were not that the canaille are apt to be troublesome, I should not much regret the distance from the Thuilleries. But adieu, mon cher ami, for I see Madame * * * is joining the party. Adieu, adieu!

Cic. Contemptible wretch!

Chest. Ah! what do I hear? Recollect that I am a man of honour, unused to the pity or the insults of an upstart, a *novus homo.* But perhaps your exclamation was not meant of me—If so, why——

Cic. I am as little inclined to insult as to flatter you. Your levity excited my indignation; but my compassion for the degeneracy of human nature, exhibited in your instance, absorbs my contempt.

Chest.

Cheſt. I could be a little angry, but, as bienſéance forbids it, I will be a philoſopher for once.—A-propos, pray do you reconcile your, what ſhall I call it—your unſmooth addreſs to thoſe rules of decorum, that gentleneſs of manners, of which you ſay you know and teach the propriety as well as myſelf?

Cic. To confeſs the truth, I would not advance the arts of embelliſhment to extreme refinement. Ornamental education, or an attention to the graces, has a connection with effeminacy. In acquiring the gentleman, I would not loſe the ſpirit of a man. There is a gracefulneſs in a manly character, a beauty in an open and ingenuous diſpoſition, which all the profeſſed teachers of the arts of pleaſing know not to infuſe.

Cheſt. You and I lived in a ſtate of manners, as different as the periods at which we lived were diſtant. You Romans, pardon me, my dear, you Romans—had a little of the brute in you. Come, come, I muſt overlook it You were obliged to court plebeians for their ſuffrages; and if *ſimilis ſimili gaudet*, it muſt be owned, that the greateſt of you were ſecure of their favour. Why, Beau Naſh would have handed your Catos and your Brutuſes out of the ball-room, if they had ſhewn their unmannerly heads in it; and my Lord Modiſh, animated with the conſcious merit of the largeſt or ſmalleſt buckles in the room, according to the temporary ton, would have laughed Pompey the Great out of countenance. Oh, Cicero, had you lived in a modern European Court, you would have caught a degree of that undeſcribable grace, which is not only the ornament, but may be the ſubſtitute of all thoſe laboured attainments which fools call ſolid merit. But it was not your good fortune, and I make allowances.

Cic. The vivacity you have acquired in ſtudying the writings and the manners of the degenerate Gauls, has led you to ſet too high a value on qualifications which dazzle the lively perceptions with a momentary blaze, and to depreciate that kind of worth which can neither be obtained nor underſtood without ſerious attention, and ſometimes painful efforts. But I will not contend with you on the propriety or impropriety of the outward

ward modes which delight a monkey nation. I will not ſpend arguments in proving that gold is more valuable than tinſel, though it glitters leſs. But I muſt cenſure you, and with an aſperity too, which, perhaps, your graces may not approve, for recommending vice as graceful, in your memorable letters.

Cheſt. That the great Cicero ſhould know ſo little of the world, really ſurpriſes me. A little libertiniſm, my dear, that's all; how can one be a gentleman without a little libertiniſm?

Cic. I ever thought that to be a gentleman, it was requiſite to be a moral man. And ſurely you, who might have enjoyed the benefit of a light to direct you, which I wanted, were blameable in omitting religion and virtue in your ſyſtem.

Cic. What! ſuperſtitious too!—You have not then converſed with your ſuperior, the philoſopher of Ferney. I thank Heaven, I was born in the ſame age with that great luminary. Prejudice had elſe, perhaps, chained me in the thraldom of my great grandmother. Theſe are enlightened days, and I find I have contributed ſomething to the general illumination, by my poſthumous letters.

Cic. Boaſt not of them. Remember you were a father.

Cheſt. And did I not endeavour moſt effectually to ſerve my ſon, by pointing out the qualifications neceſſary to a foreign ambaſſador, for which department I always deſigned him? Few fathers have taken more pains to accompliſh a ſon than myſelf. There was nothing I did not condeſcend to point out to him.

Cic. True: your condeſcenſion was great indeed. You were the pander of your ſon. You not only taught him the mean arts of diſſimulation, the petty tricks which degrade nobility; but you corrupted his principles, fomented his paſſions, and even pointed out objects for their gratification. You might have left the taſk of teaching him faſhionable vice to a vicious world. Example, and the corrupt affections of human nature, will ever be capable of accompliſhing this unnatural purpoſe. But a parent, the guardian appointed by nature for an uninſtructed offspring introduced into a dangerous world, who himſelf takes upon him the office of

ſeduction,

seduction, is a monster indeed. I also had a son. I was tenderly solicitous for the right conduct of his education. I intrusted him indeed to Cratippus at Athens; but, like you, I could not help transmitting instructions dictated by paternal love. Those instructions are contained in my book of Offices; a book which has ever been cited by the world as a proof to what a height the morality of the heathens was advanced without the light of revelation. I own I feel a conscious pride in it; not on account of the ability which it may display, but for the principles it teaches, and the good, I flatter myself, it has diffused. You did not indeed intend your instructions for the world; but as you gave them to a son you loved, it may be concluded that you thought them true wisdom, and withheld them only because they were contrary to the professions of the unenlightened. They have been generally read, and tend to introduce the manners, vices, and frivolous habits of the nation you admired—to your own manly nation, who, of all others, once approached most nearly to the noble simplicity of the Romans.

Cheſt. Spare me, Cicero. I have never been accustomed to the rough conversation of an old Roman. I feel myself little in his company. I seem to shrink in his noble presence. I never felt my insignificance so forcibly as now. French courtiers and French philosophers have been my models; and amid the dissipation of pleasure, and the hurry of affected vivacity, I never considered the gracefulness of virtue, and the beauty of an open, sincere, and manly character.

No. CLXVI. CONJECTURES ON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ORIENTAL AND SEPTENTRIONAL POETRY.

THE productions of the mind, like those of the earth, are found to have different degrees of vigour and beauty in different climates. In the more northern

northern regions, where the nerves are braced by cold, thoſe works are the commoneſt, and attain to the greateſt perfection, which proceed from the exertion of the rational powers, and the painful efforts of the judgment. The ſciences, like the hardy pine, flouriſh on the bleakeſt mountains; while the works of taſte and fancy ſeem to ſhrink from the rude blaſt, with all the tenderneſs of the ſenſitive-plant, and to require the genial warmth of a nearer ſun to give them their full luxuriance and maturity. Ariſtotle, Newton, and Locke, were the natives and inhabitants of temperate regions. Experience indeed ſeems to prove, that all the mental powers exiſt in their greateſt degree of ſtrength and perfection among thoſe who inhabit that part of the globe which lies between the tropic of Cancer and the Arctic circle. No complete and celebrated work of genius was ever produced in the torrid zone.

But whether the diverſity of genius in countries nearer or remoter from the ſun proceeds from natural cauſes, or from the adventitious circumſtances of different modes of education, different views, and a different ſpirit of emulation, it is certain that the productions of Eaſtern and Northern genius are diſſimilar. Some ingenious critics have indeed pointed out a reſemblance between the Gothic and Oriental poetry, in the wild enthuſiaſm of an irregular imagination. And they have accounted for it, by ſuppoſing, with great probability, that in an emigration of the Aſiatics into Scandinavia, the Eaſtern people brought with them their national ſpirit of poetry, and communicated it to the tribes with whom they united. The reſemblance, therefore in works produced ſince this union, does not prove that the Northern and Oriental genius were originally alike. Thoſe productions of either which are allowed to be original, and to bear no marks of imitation, have perhaps no other reſemblance than that which commonly proceeds from the ſimilar operation of ſimilar faculties.

It ſeems, indeed, that a cauſe may be aſſigned for this diverſity of Northern and Oriental productions, without attributing it to an eſſential difference in the original conſtitution of the human underſtanding. The imagination is ſtrongly affected by ſurrounding objects, and

and acquires vigour by frequent exercise. He who is placed in a climate where the serenity of the weather constantly presents him with blue skies, luxuriant plantations, and sunny prospects, will find his imagination the strongest of his faculties; and, in the expression of his sentiments, will abound in allusions to natural objects, in similies, and in the most lively metaphors. His imagination will be his distinguishing excellence, because it will be more exercised than any other of his faculties; and all the powers both of body and mind are known to acquire vigour by habitual exertion. He, on the other hand, whose lot it is to exist in a less favoured part of the globe, who is driven by the inclemency of his climate to warm roofs, and, instead of basking in the sunshine amidst all the combined beauties of nature, flies for refuge from the cold to the blazing hearth of a smoky cottage, will seek, in the exercise of his reason, those resources which he cannot find in the actual employment of his imagination. Good sense and just reasoning will therefore predominate in his productions. Even in the wildest of his flights, a methodical plan, the result of thought and reflection, will appear, on examination, to restrain the irregularities of licentious fancy.

Consistently with this theory we find Oriental poetry exhibiting the most picturesque scenes of nature, and illustrating every moral sentiment or argumentative assertion by similies, not indeed exact in the resemblance, but sufficiently analogous to strike and gratify the imagination. Strong imagery, animated sentiment, warmth and vivacity of expression, all of which are the effects of a lively fancy, are its constant characteristics. The accuracy of logic, and the subtlety of metaphysics, are of a nature too frigid to influence the Oriental writer. He feels not the beauty of demonstration, he pursues not a chain of argument, and he submits to the force of persuasion, rather from the dictates of his feelings than from rational conviction. He endeavours to influence his reader in the same manner, and commonly excites an emotion so violent, as to produce a more powerful effect than would be experienced even from conclusive argumentation.

No.

No. CLXVII. CURSORY REMARKS ON THE POETRY OF THE PROPHETS, OF ISAIAH IN PARTICULAR, AND ON THE BEAUTIES OF BIBLICAL POETRY IN GENERAL.

THE Sibylline oracles owed their ſolemn air, their credit, and their power over the fancy, to the dark and difficult ſtyle in which they were compoſed. Virgil's Pollio, ſuppoſed to have been written from a hint taken from the books of the Sibyls, is the moſt admired of his Eclogues; and a great ſhare of the pleaſure derived from the peruſal of it, is juſtly attributed to the judgment of the poet, in leaving more to be underſtood than meets the ear. The forebodings of Caſſandra were not attended to by the Trojans; and perhaps the true reaſon was, that they were not completely underſtood. The witches in Macbeth add to the terrible ſolemnity of prophetical incantation, by its darkneſs and uncertainty.

Obſcurity ſeems to have been the characteriſtic of all writings pretending to prediction. It certainly increaſed their poetical merit, though, among the Greeks and Romans, it was probably no more than a ſtudied artifice to evade, if the event did not correſpond to the prophecy, the imputation of impoſture. Thus were the oracles of Apollo delivered in ambiguous phraſes which frequently admitted a contrary, and always a doubtful, interpretation.

Without this artful proceeding their authority had not been ſo long maintained. Frequent failure, without any ſubterfuge to preſerve the prophetical power unſuſpected, would ſoon have ſilenced the Delphic prieſteſs. But while the ænigmatical prediction preſerved the dignity of the oracle, by inſpiring awe, it contributed to its ſecurity by facilitating evaſion.

The Sacred Prophecies have that obſcurity which diſtinguiſhes this ſpecies of writing. The final cauſe of it, however, was to exerciſe the faith and ſagacity of mankind.

kind. The beauty which it adds to the poetry cannot be ſuppoſed to ariſe from deſign or ſkill in poetry as an art, but is the neceſſary reſult of natural propriety. And none but the unbeliever will ſuppoſe that, like the oracles at Delphos, they admitted a doubtful, in order to admit a double conſtruction.

The prophecy of Iſaiah abounds in the beauties of Oriental poetry. The tranſlation is a literal one, and, though it may be found inaccurate by a Lowth or a Kennicot, will, I believe, hardly admit of improvement in force, ſimplicity, and animation. It does honour to the feelings of the tranſlators, who, though they have performed their taſk with ſo much ſpirit, had nothing elſe in view but fidelity. To refinement and taſte they made no pretenſions; and that their work is ſo well executed, muſt have been owing to the excellence of their natural ſentiment. We have ſeveral literal tranſlations of the ancient poets into Engliſh proſe, which are in requeſt among ſchool boys. In theſe we find no remains of that beauty which has been celebrated from age to age from its firſt production. Few of theſe are rendered ſo faithfully, word for word, from their originals, as the Scriptures, which, notwithſtanding this diſadvantage, are the ſublimeſt and moſt intereſting books in the Engliſh language.

That they are thus excellent, it may indeed be ſaid, is not to be wondered at. They proceeded from that real inſpiration to which the celebrated writers of antiquity only pretended. And if the enthuſiaſm, which the imaginary aſſiſtance of a fabulous deity excited, could diffuſe that captivating ſpirit over the works of a mortal poet which has charmed every ſucceeding age, it will be an obvious inference, that the genuine afflatus of the great Author of the univerſe muſt produce a work of eminent and unqueſtionable beauty. Such reaſoning is plauſible; but, in the preſent caſe, it may not be improper to obſerve, that the divine inſpiration operated intentionally no farther than in dictating truth of repreſentation, and in laying open ſcenes of futurity; and that the beauties diſcoverable in the medium of compoſition, by which thoſe primary ends are accompliſhed, are but collateral and ſubordinate effects. Conſidered

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as ſuch, every man of ſentiment feels them of a ſuperior kind, and if he judges by the criterion of his undiſſembled feelings, muſt acknowledge, that though they are ſometimes reſembled in Homer, they are ſeldom equalled, and never excelled. Take a view of the poetical beauties merely as the productions of Iſaiah, a very ancient poet of Judæa, and his writings will ſurely claim the attention of a man of letters, as much as thoſe of the native of Smyrna or of Aſcra.

They who pretend to an exemption from prejudice, evince the futility of their pretenſions, when they attribute the general admiration of the Scriptures, as compoſitions, to opinions formed in their favour in the early period of infancy. The truth is, the prejudices which they have unreaſonably adopted againſt the doctrines derived from thoſe antient books, extend themſelves to the ſtyle and ſentiment: but, ſurely, excluſive of the religious tendency, and of the arguments for the authenticity of the books, they claim a great degree of veneration from their antiquity, and juſtly excite the attention of criticiſm, as curious ſpecimens of Oriental compoſition.

It might, indeed, have been expected, from the general taſte which at preſent prevails for the remains of ancient Engliſh poetry, that thoſe works, which juſtly boaſt a higher antiquity than any of the productions of North or South Britain, would have been particularly regarded. But, while the ballad of a minſtrel, beautiful, perhaps, and well worth preſerving, has been recovered from its duſt, and committed to memory, the family Bible has been ſuffered to lie unopened, or has been peruſed by many only with a view to painful improvement, without an idea of the poſſibility of deriving from it the elegant pleaſures of literary entertainment.

Yet even the vulgar often feel the full effect of beauties which they know not how to point out; and are affected with a very ſtrong ſenſe of pleaſure, while they are reading the Scriptures ſolely from motives of duty, and a deſire of edification. In truth, among thoſe whoſe natural taſte is not corrupted by falſe refinement, which perhaps is the moſt numerous, though not the moſt diſtinguiſhed part of the community, the Bible is read as affording

affording all the delight of pleaſing poetry and hiſtory; and it may, therefore, juſtly be ſaid to be the moſt popular book in the Engliſh language.

But all readers, whether vulgar or refined, who fully feel and acknowledge the admirable touches of nature and ſimplicity, which are obſervable in every page of thoſe writings, will, perhaps, receive additional ſatisfaction, when they diſcover that their taſte is conformable to claſſical ideas of literary excellence.

There is, in the preſent age, a very numerous tribe of readers, who have formed their taſte and ſentiments from the writings of the philoſophers of Geneva, and from the ſceptical ſophiſtry of our own countrymen. They are known to make pretenſions to a very uncommon degree of refinement in their judgment of compoſition, and to condemn every work, whatever marks it may bear of a ſtrong, though uncultivated genius, which wants the laſt poliſh of delicacy and correctneſs, and has nothing ſimilar to thoſe modern productions, with which alone they have been converſant. With all their boaſted comprehenſion of mind, they ſeem to want ideas, which may operate as principles in forming a juſt opinion of thoſe works, which were compoſed before the invention of ſyſtematic rules, and before native ſentiment was ſuperſeded by the feeble, though elegant, feelings, of which we boaſt in a very advanced ſtate of civilization. Under theſe unfavourable prepoſſeſſions, the Bible appears to them as an aſſemblage of groſſneſs and vulgariſms, which, therefore, without determining upon the authenticity of it, they avoid reading, apprehending that they can derive no pleaſure from it, and that they may corrupt their ſtyle, and catch inelegance.

With theſe it would be a valuable point gained, for their own ſakes as well as for ſociety, if they could be prevailed on ſo far to lay aſide their prejudices as to open the book, and judge of it from what they feel and remark on a fair examination. If they could once be induced to read it with avidity, from an expectation of literary amuſement, they could ſcarcely fail of receiving, at the ſame time, a more important benefit.

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In an age like the preſent, when all orders are, in ſome degree, addicted to letters, he certainly renders great ſervice to religion, and conſequently to ſociety, who unites taſte with theology, and excites the attention of the careleſs and ſceptical to thoſe books, of which a ſenſe of duty enjoins the peruſal, by ſetting their beauties in a new or a ſtronger light.

And that this opinion of the peculiar beauties of Iſaiah is not ſingular, if it is neceſſary to appeal to any other proof than the common feelings of mankind, is evident from the judgment of a popular writer of our own, who, as he was indiſputably a poet himſelf, will be allowed, by the moſt rigid critics, to be a competent judge of poetry. Mr. Pope's Meſſiah is one of the beſt known and moſt eſteemed of his ſhorter works; but that it derived its chief merit from Iſaiah there can be no doubt, and the amiable poet felt a pleaſure to acknowledge. Though ſuſpected to have been leſs a friend to religion than to virtue, he neglected not the opportunity which this paſtoral afforded, to form a compariſon between Iſaiah and Virgil, in a few parallel paſſages, fairly exhibited in a tranſlation equally literal, and to exhibit the Oriental poet to great advantage. There are many parodies, imitations, and paraphraſes of this animated prophet's poetry, all which, at the ſame time that they evince how difficult his excellencies are to be equalled, are proofs that he has been generally admired as a poet.

But, after all, the reader muſt judge of the ſacred writings for himſelf. If he attends to what he feels, and lays aſide prepoſſeſſion, his judgment will be favourable and juſt. To remove a ſingle prejudice, which can prevent the univerſal acceptance of books of univerſal concern, is to contribute greatly to the general happineſs. An attempt to render the prophetic writers objects of particular attention, in an age when our moſt ingenious theologiſts are employed in illuſtrating their meaning at a lecture wiſely eſtabliſhed for that purpoſe, muſt, at leaſt, have the merit of being well-timed.

And ſurely every one who wiſhes to promote the deſirable coalition of taſte with piety, muſt accept,

with gratitude, the labours of the venerable Lowth, whose lectures on the sacred poetry of the Hebrews, and observations on Isaiah, have displayed, in biblical literature, the unexpected charms of classic elegance.

No. CLXVIII. ON PREACHING AND SERMON WRITERS.

FEW institutions can contribute more to preserve civilization, and promote moral and intellectual improvement among all ranks of people, than the establishment of public lectures, in every part of the kingdom, periodically repeated after a short interval.

Such is the light in which are to be considered the discourses appointed by the wisdom of the church, to be every where held on the recurrence of the seventh day. By these the meanest and the most illiterate are enabled to hear moral and philosophical *treatises* on every thing that concerns their several duties, without expence, and without solicitation.

And whatever is urged by men who are ill-affected to all ecclesiastical institutions, there is no doubt but that great political, as well as moral, benefit is derived to society from a practice thus universal. But it is a misfortune long ago lamented, that men are incapable of estimating the real value of advantages, till experience has shewn what it is to want them.

It is certainly true, that since the acquisition of books has been facilitated by their numbers, oral instruction is rendered less necessary. But though books are easily procured, yet, even in this age of information, there are thousands in the lower classes who cannot read. Besides, it is a well-known truth that the same precepts inculcated by a living instructor, adorned by a proper oratory, enforced by a serious and authoritative manner, produce a powerful effect, not to be experienced in solitary retirement. There is likewise a sympathy communicated in a numerous audience, which attaches the mind more strongly to the subject.

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The obvious utility of diſcourſes from the pulpit is proved by the deciſions of experience. For, notwithſtanding the complaints againſt the levity and profaneneſs of the age, churches are ſtill frequented with apparent pleaſure. And to be placed in a ſituation where a good preacher preſides, is by many eſteemed a very eſſential requiſite to an agreeable retreat.

For excellent preachers this nation has been long diſtinguiſhed; excellent, not ſo much in the talents of an orator, as in the compoſition of diſcourſes. With an uncultivated voice, in an uncouth manner, accompanied with aukward attitudes, they have delivered harangues ſcarcely excelled in the ſchools of Athens. As the French have exhibited their characteriſtic levity even in their boaſted ſermons, ſo the Engliſh have diſplayed their natural ſolidity.

The ſermons of the laſt century are indeed too long for the attention of modern indolence, but they abound with beauty that would reward it. Jeremy Taylor poſſeſſed an invention profuſely fertile; a warm, rich, lively imagination; a profound knowledge of authors, ſacred and profane, poetical, hiſtorical, philoſophical. He has embelliſhed his ſermons with citations from them, and has interwoven their gold into the rich tiſſue of his own compoſition.

Nearly at the ſame time with Taylor aroſe Iſaac Barrow, a mighty genius, whoſe ardour was capable of accompliſhing all it undertook. The tide of his eloquence flows with ſmooth yet irreſiſtible rapidity. He treats his ſubject almoſt with mathematical preciſion, and never leaves it till he has exhauſted it. It has been ſaid, that a late moſt popular orator of the Houſe of Lords aſſerted, that he owed much of the fire of his eloquence to the ſtudy of Barrow.

His editor, Tillotſon, is more popular. His merit is unqueſtionably great, and his fame has been extended to ve exalted heights by the praiſes of Addiſon. He writes with ſufficient judgment and perſpicuity; but there are thoſe who venture to ſuggeſt, that he has been too much celebrated as a model of fine compoſition. They allow him every praiſe as a moſt excellent divine; but when they conſider him as a writer, they think his

periods might have been ſhorter, and his rhythm more harmonious.

Sharp has been juſtly celebrated for the perſpicuity of his ſtyle, and the ardent flow of unaffected piety

Of a very different character from theſe, South has obtained a great and deſerved reputation. Wit was his talent, yet he often reaches ſublimity. He is, however, one of thoſe authors who is to be admired and not imitated. To excite a laugh from the pulpit, is to inſpire the hearer with a levity of temper ill-adapted to the indulgence of devotional feelings. The taſte of the age in which South flouriſhed gave countenance to pulpit jocularity. But though it is true that the lovers of comedy have found their taſte gratified in the peruſal of South's ſermons, yet the man of ſerious judgment alſo will diſcover many ſolid arguments, many judicious obſervations, and many fine expreſſions, intermixed with a ſeries of proſaic epigrams.

The ſagacious Clarke pretended not to wit. He affected not the ambitious ornaments of rhetoric. He rarely reaches the ſublime, or aims at the pathetic; but in a clear, manly, flowing ſtyle, he delivers the moſt important doctrines, confirmed on every occaſion by well-applied paſſages from ſcripture. If he was not a ſhining orator, according to the ideas of rhetoricians, he was a very agreeable as well as uſeful preacher. He was not perfectly orthodox in his opinions; a circumſtance which has lowered his character among many. Certain it is, that he would have done more good in the world, had he confined his labours to practical divinity. Speculative and polemical divinity commonly diffuſes ſcepticiſm, without contributing any thing to moral reformation.

The ſermons that have been preached at Boyle's Lectures are among the beſt argued in the language. They have been the laboured productions of the moſt ingenious men. But the whole collection never did ſo much good as a ſingle practical diſcourſe of Tillotſon.

Atterbury was a polite writer. His ſermons probably owed ſome of their fame, among his cotemporaries, who have laviſhly applauded him, to his mode of delivery in the pulpit; for the Tatler ſays, it was ſuch as would have

have been approved by a Longinus and Demoſthenes. He ſeems to have introduced the very judicious method of addreſſing the underſtanding in the beginning of the ſermon, and the paſſions at the cloſe.

Rogers, ſays his panegyriſt Dr. Burton, poſſeſſed an eloquence, nervous, ſimple, perſuaſive, and beautiful. An unſtudied elegance marks his ſtyle. He ſeems to have attained to that nice judgment, which adapted the ſame diſcourſe to a ruſtic, a city, an academical congregation. In a profeſſed elogium it is indeed allowable to exaggerate; yet what Burton has advanced is confirmed by peruſing the ſermons of Rogers. They are perſpicuous, ſolid, and written with remarkable eaſe.

Seed has obtained a great and deſerved popularity. With a rich and ſportive fancy he combined a ſolid judgment. Unlike the generality of thoſe writers who affect to be flowery, he abounds in ſound argument, and in juſt remarks on human life. A ſevere critic would condemn him for a profuſion of embelliſhment; but I know not how it is, he had the ſkill to give repeated pleaſure without ſatiety.

Such are the more popular of our Engliſh ſermon-writers, the models of thoſe many divines, who, with very great merit, poſſeſs not the reputation of remarkable originality. To enumerate them all were an endleſs taſk; for of no books in the Engliſh language has there been ſo unceaſing a ſucceſſion, as of ſermons; and to ſpeak of living writers with freedom, is too often like thruſting a hand into the neſt of the hornet.

Of late there have appeared publications of ſermons addreſſed to perſons of particular ages or deſcriptions. Though ſome of them exhibited a highly florid eloquence, and were received with great applauſe, yet they were too much ornamented, and, like many kinds of food, poſſeſſed a ſweetneſs which delights for a moment, but ſoon terminates in loathing. They amuſed the imagination, and ſometimes touched the heart; but they left to the underſtanding little employment.

Sermons, which came forth with leſs eclat, will ſtand a better chance of deſcending to poſterity. Such are thoſe of Sherlock, Secker, and Jortin. The happineſs of mankind is concerned in the preſervation of their

works,

works, while thoſe of the frothy declaimer are daily dropping unregretted into the gulph of oblivion.

It is to be lamented, that the glaring and meretricious embelliſhments of the ſuperficial writer are more commonly imitated by young preachers, than the chaſter beauties of the ſound divine. Fine language, as it is called, with a few hacknied ſentiments and addreſſes to the paſſions, often conſtitute the whole merit of diſcourſes preached before the moſt numerous congregations in the metropolis.

The paſtors of the largeſt flocks uſually affect popularity. Extemporary preaching is one of the moſt effectual means of obtaining it. It always pleaſes the vulgar; probably becauſe it conveys the idea of immediate inſpiration. It is true alſo, that by pleaſing the vulgar, it is enabled to affect them. But yet there are many reaſons to prevent its reception among the judicious. It may raiſe the paſſions, it may communicate a momentary fit of devotion; but from its haſty production it can ſeldom be correct or ſolid. It is, indeed, ſeldom attempted but by the ſuperficial. The greateſt divines have not been preſumptuous enough to lay before their audience the effuſions of the moment, but have uſually beſtowed much time and care in the compoſition of a ſingle ſermon. We are indeed informed that Clarke ſometimes preached without written notes; but the number of his printed ſermons is a proof that this was not his general practice. They who poſſeſs the abilities of a Clarke may, however, ſafely venture to produce an unpremeditated harangue. But they alſo would do right to recollect, that the orations even of Demoſthenes himſelf ſmelt of the lamp.

Againſt thoſe who prepare their diſcourſes, a general complaint has been made, that ſermons are become in theſe days merely moral eſſays. There was a time when a paſſage from ſcripture, well introduced, was eſteemed a flower of ſpeech far ſurpaſſing every ornament of rhetoric. It is now avoided as an ugly patch, that chequers with deformity the gloſſy contexure.

A profeſſed chriſtian preacher, addreſſing a profeſſed chriſtian audience, ſhould remember, that, however beautiful his diſcourſe, if it is no more than a moral diſcourſe,

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he may preach it, and they may hear it, and yet both continue unconverted heathens.

Every congregation of real chriſtians wiſhes to find all morality deduced from ſcripture, and confirmed by it. Moral precepts, thus adorned, come from the pulpit as from an oracle. Scriptural language is not inelegant; but if it were, a preacher ſhould let motives of duty exclude oſtentation. In truth, he never appears to greater advantage, than when he ſeems to forget his own excellence, and to loſe ſight of himſelf in the earneſtneſs of his endeavours to promote the welfare of his audience.

No. CLXIX. ON THE NEGLECT OF ANTIENT AUTHORS. IN A LETTER.

THOUGH it be true, as you remark, that, in the preſent times, learning is univerſally admired, and the character of a man of taſte and letters is affected not only in colleges, but in polite circles; not only by the philoſopher, but by the beau and the coxcomb; yet is it to be lamented, that there ſeems to remain no general reliſh for ſolid erudition, very little veneration for the inimitable productions of Greece and Rome, and but a ſlight attention to the more abſtruſe ſciences and abſtracted diſquiſitions. We read for pleaſure, for amuſement, for mere paſtime, which dry argument and connected reaſoning cannot always furniſh. Light, airy, ſuperficial compoſitions, without fatiguing the intellect, flatter the imagination; and for the ſake of this empty ſatisfaction, to this trivial kind of reading is our time devoted, without regard to improvement of morals, or enlargement of underſtanding.

From neglecting the writers of antiquity, we become ignorant of their beauties, vainly ſuppoſe that excellence is confined to modern authors, and that the antients can be admired only by prejudice and bigotry. Even they who are really ſenſible of the excellence of the

the claſſics, are willing, becauſe they have neglected the ſtudy of them, to depretiate their merits, and to extenuate the infamy of their ignorance, by pretending that the knowledge of them is not deſirable. Some there are, who, though they profeſs an admiration of the antients, read them not in the originals, becauſe they think it poſſible, without the trouble of loading their memories with dead languages, to taſte all their beauties through the medium of tranſlations.

To thoſe who affirm, that an admiration of the antients is founded on prejudice, it is ſufficient to reply, that the unanimous applauſe of whole nations, for many ages, cannot, with the appearance of reaſon, be attributed to implicit attachment, or ignorant wonder.

As for thoſe who condemn the Greek and Latin authors, becauſe they will not take the pains to underſtand them, they are to be cenſured for their indolence, and deſpiſed for their artifice: and they who read a Horace, or a Virgil in an Engliſh tranſlation, however well performed, muſt be told, that they will form no better idea of the inexpreſſible graces of theſe poets, than they would receive of the maſter-pieces of a Raphael or a Guido, from the daubing of a mere copyiſt. In the transfuſion from one language to another, as it has been frequently remarked, the ſpirit evaporates, and ſeldom any thing remains but a *caput mortuum*.

The matter may be preſerved, the ideas juſtly exhibited, the hiſtorical part accurately repreſented; but the manner, the ſtyle, the beauties of diction, which conſtitute more than half the excellence of the claſſics, can ſeldom be transferred to a modern language. They who read Tranſlations only, are like thoſe who view the figures of a beautiful piece of tapeſtry on the wrong ſide.

I muſt then earneſtly, recommend it to you, if you wiſh to taſte the genuine ſweets of the claſſic ſtreams, to drink at the fountain.

No. CLXX. ON THE RETIREMENT OF A COUNTRY TOWN. IN A LETTER.

Romæ rus optas, abſentem ruſticus urbem
Tollis ad aſtra—— HOR.

SIR,

MY father had a lucrative place in the Cuſtoms; but as his family was large, he was unable to leave us fortunes, and contented himſelf with placing us in ſuch ſituations in the world, as would give us an opportunity of acquiring a decent proviſion, if we ſhould not be wanting to ourſelves. It was my lot, after having received a tincture of claſſical education, to be put apprentice to a genteel buſineſs at the weſt end of the town. As ſoon as I was out of my time, I ſet up for myſelf; and though I cannot boaſt that I was ever in a very great way, yet, by attention and frugality, I had accumulated, at the age of forty, a ſum ſufficient to enable me to live in a comfortable manner, without the anxiety and confinement of trade. A handſome legacy from a relation of my wife, at once determined me, in my long meditated intention, to ſell off at prime coſt, and retire.

I had always entertained a great idea of the happineſs of living in the country. It was, indeed, natural in one who had dwelt near forty years in a duſty warehouſe, amidſt the dirt, ſmoke, and noiſe of the Strand; and who had ſeldom made an excurſion beyond the cake-houſe at Hoxton, or the bowling-green at Hackney.

One morning, while I was revolving in my mind the idea of retirement, I happened to caſt my eye on an advertiſement in the news-paper, in which a houſe, garden, and grounds, in a market town, about five and thirty miles from London, were announced to be let at fifty pounds a year. This appeared to me too advantageous a bargain to be neglected; for, you muſt know, I gave a hundred a year for my ſhop, the area of which

was no more than three yards by four; and here were twenty acres of land, and a manſion that would contain my houſe ten times over, to be let for half the money. There was no time to be loſt: I ſhut up ſhop, took my wife and family down, and ſettled immediately.

As I did not go into the country on an œconomical plan, I was reſolved to launch out a little, and live, as I could very well afford it, in a moderately genteel ſtyle. I ſet up a poſt-chaiſe, kept ſeveral horſes, and two livery-ſervants. This appearance placed me on a level with the beſt families in the neighbourhood, and accordingly I was viſited by all who claimed the rank of gentlefolks.

But, alas! I found, not in this place, that happineſs which I expected. I have been convinced by experience, that a market town is not a proper ſituation for the retirement of thoſe who wiſh to taſte the pleaſures of rural life, and to paſs the evening of their days in a ſtate of tranquillity. That you may judge of the impropriety of ſuch a retreat, I ſhall give you an account of my reception in it, and of ſeveral circumſtances, which render it leſs fit for the enjoyments of thoſe peaceful and domeſtic pleaſures, which every one who retires from buſineſs expects, than the noiſieſt ſtreet in the metropolis of the empire.

The firſt viſits were paid us from motives of curioſity, under the pretence of politeneſs. Our perſons, our addreſs, our characters, were examined with all the ſeverity of criticiſm, but without the candour of benevolence. The various remarks that were made, furniſhed, with improvements and embelliſhments, an inexhauſtible fund of converſation for the next three months; and I have had an opportunity of procuring the literal reports of one or two of our examiners, which, as they have entertained me, I ſhall communicate for *your* amuſement.

In the morning, after her firſt viſit, the 'ſquire's wife ſet out to eaſe her mind of the burden of intelligence under which it laboured; which ſhe did, in every houſe ſhe entered, in nearly the following words:

"Well, have you ſeen the new-comers? Pray how "do you like Mrs. Townſend? Oh! I have a charm-

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" ing little anecdote concerning her. You muſt know, " I have learnt who ſhe was before ſhe was married. I " thought as much—do you know her father was a " cheeſemonger in Thames ſtreet—but he broke, you " muſt know, and ſo Miſs was taken from boarding " ſchool, and in proceſs of time arrived at the high " dignity of upper-maid to alderman Portſoken's lady. " But, being vaſt pretty, you muſt know, and having " had a prodigious fine education, Mr. Townſend the " common-council-man fell in love with her, and mar- " ried her. This is all fact, you may depend upon " it; for our Sally heard it this very morning at the " ſhop.—Can't ſtay; but thought I would call and let " you know. You ſee how high ſome people hold up " their heads, but you'll underſtand how to look upon " 'em now.—I have a little hundred places to call at; " —ſo good morning."

Miſs Prue, a maiden lady of irreproachable character, ſet off on the ſame expedition, as ſoon as ſhe had put on her morning-cap. Brimful of news, ſhe could hardly contain herſelf till ſhe arrived (as Foote deſcribes it) at the lawyer's braſs-knocker and mahogany-coloured door. No ſooner was ſhe ſeated than out it flew.

" Well, Mrs. Leaſum, we were at the new-comers' " laſt night; and ſuch a night! Why they know no " more of cards, than if they had not been uſed to play " above five or ſix times a week in their lives. As to " the father and mother, one ſhould not expect much " from perſons, who, I ſuppoſe, got all their money " in Houndſditch; but really I pity the poor girls. " They ſat ſilent half an hour; and then aſked me, " Lord help 'em! if I had read the laſt new thing that " came out. Pray what do you think of their perſons? " —Some people ſay the younger is handſome; and " indeed ſhe does ſeem very good-natured. But as to " beauty!—all I ſhall ſay is—ſhe does not pleaſe me. " To be ſure, they are both fair enough too—their " features pretty regular, and ſome think their eyes " very fine—but, Lord! ſo aukward, ſo modeſt, and " yet, at the ſame time, ſo much of the city air about " them, that they are abſolutely intolerable.—In ſhort, " I don't chuſe to ſpeak out—I am always tender of " the

" the ſubject of characters—but I have heard ſome-
" thing—" Here ſhe concluded with a whiſper, and in a great hurry withdrew.

The next houſe ſhe called in at, was the apothecary's. The apothecary was glad of a mouthful of news for his patients. His patients ſwallowed it eagerly, and ſoon afterwards evacuated themſelves on all their viſitors, who went home, in great ſpirits, to ſpread what they had picked up among their families, and friends; and thus, in the ſpace of twenty-four hours, it was communicated over the whole pariſh.

With reſpect to myſelf, at the firſt weekly club after our arrival, the 'ſquire, the attorney, the apothecary, and two or three gentlemen ſots, who lived upon their means, as it is called, ſat in judgment upon my character. After much debate, in which an equal portion of candour and diſcernment was diſplayed, I was found guilty of being a cockney, of never having hunted, of never having ſhot a partridge, of keeping a poor table, and yet, at the ſame time, living above my fortune; and laſtly, of having a great deal of pride that little became me. The reſult was, that though they ſhould condeſcend to call upon me, as long as my pipe of excellent Port laſted, yet I was not to be admitted a member of their jolly ſociety.

It is true, I viſit, and am viſited; but as I really do not take much pleaſure in a drunken bout; as I am not very well ſkilled in farming or fox-hunting; and from a tenderneſs of conſtitution, am obliged to be abſtemious in the articles of eating and drinking, we commonly have more form in our meetings than cordiality. To aſſemble together for the ſake of liberal and manly converſation is held inſipid. My ſons are never at home; and my daughters, who have been taught to ſet a high value on mental accompliſhments, neither give nor receive much ſatisfaction in the company of thoſe, who think it the very ſummit of education, to have learned, at a boarding-ſchool, to dance and play a minuet.

The envy, the jealouſy, and the impertinence of the lower ſort of people, is not leſs conſpicuous and troubleſome than that of their ſuperiors. If we ſend to buy any thing, we are forced to pay ſomething more than

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any body elſe, becauſe we are the rich new-comers. If my cow happens to break into neighbour Hodge's field, ſhe is pounded without notice, becauſe, forſooth, ſhe is the Londoner's cow. If we walk down the town, all the doors and windows are flung open, and crowded with ſpectators, juſt as it is in London at my Lord Mayor's ſhow. My poor wife and daughter's ſilks and ſattins are criticized with unrelenting ſeverity.

Whenever my ſervants go to any ſhop, a ſet of goſſips make a point of meeting them, in order to aſk what I had for dinner, how much ſmall beer is conſumed by us in a week, and a thouſand ſimilar queſtions. No little art is made uſe of to perſuade them that I am ſtingy, and that my place is the worſt in the town; though, to my certain knowledge, I am ſo far impoſed upon, being a ſtranger, as that I am forced to pay a third more wages than any body elſe in the neighbourhood.

Nothing paſſes in my houſe but it becomes matter of general converſation. If a couſin or an old acquaintance comes from London to ſpend a few days with me, no pains are ſpared to learn of the ſervants who and what he is; and if my ſervants know nothing about him, Miſs Prue takes care to ſuggeſt, that he is in ſome low trade, a mere mechanic in his beſt ſuit of cloaths. If he ſhould take an evening walk with my daughters, unaccompanied with me or my wife, he is going to be married to one of them directly. His name, his age, his origin, are immediately divulged; the fortune on both ſides aſcertained, and the day fixed.

If my wife and I happen to ſpar a little, as is uſual among thoſe who love one another with the ſincereſt affection, a report is immediately circulated that I uſe my wife, or that ſhe uſes me ill, and that, notwithſtanding appearances to the contrary, we do not live happily together. I can never buy nor ſell a horſe, a cow, or a pig, nor change a ſervant, but I am called behind my back a fool for my pains, and it is hinted that I do not know what I am about; and indeed how ſhould I, ſince I am a cit? If I make an alteration in my garden, dig a ditch, mend a pigſtye, or thatch a hovel, my taſte, my judgment, my prudence, are called in queſtion, and it is charitably wiſhed that I do not bring my noble

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to ninepence, and my ninepence to nothing. If, by the careleſſneſs of my cook-maid, a joint of meat ſhould happen to be a little tainted in the dog-days, it gets wind, and it is immediately ſaid that I feed my family on ſtinking meat for cheapneſs. If a loaf ſhould be a little mouldy in damp weather, I am railed at for keeping my bread till it is ſpoiled, rather than give it to a poor creature who is periſhing with hunger. In ſhort, hardly a mouſe can ſtir in any part of the houſe from the parlour to the ſcullery, but the barber, the chandler, ſhop keeper, the landlady at the alehouſe, the mantua-maker, and the chair-woman, find means to get a knowledge of it for the entertainment of their cuſtomers.

Till I lived in this place, I never thought myſelf of ſuch conſequence as to merit general attention. In London, my next door neighbour neither knew nor cared what paſſed in my parlour or kitchen. I can however eaſily account for this difference. In a market town, of no great opulence or extent, there are not objects enough to divert the idle. No plays, no auctions, no fine ſhops, no ſhew-glaſſes. Scarcely any amuſement for ſots, goſſips, and old maids, but thinking and talking on the affairs and families of other people. The ſettlement of a ſtranger in their town is food to them for years. They have been too long uſed to the natives to find any novelty in their concerns, and perhaps have been induced to regard them with that partiality of long acquaintance or of relationſhip, which precludes malevolence. But ſtrangers are lawful game; and the cruelty of little minds is found to take a pleaſure in detracting from their characters, and defeating, by falſe and malignant repreſentations, thoſe ſchemes of happineſs with which they flattered themſelves in retirement.

Sick of ſuch impertinence, and diſguſted with the ill-nature of all around me, I have reſolved to quit the market town, and have juſt hired a houſe delightfully ſituated in a diſtant village. It is the paternal habitation of a man, who, having hopes of riſing at court, chuſes to leave his charming retreat, for a ſmall dark houſe in one of the diſmal lanes that lead into the Strand. I ſhall have no near neighbours but the vicar, who is not only a learned, virtuous, religious, and benevolent,

nevolent, but alſo an agreeable man. His family, all of whom have that elegance of mind which reſults from a taſte for letters, will be much with mine. They have already formed a reciprocal attachment. And I hope to have found at laſt, in this place, that happineſs, which I vainly ſought in a more frequented ſituation. Of this I am confident, that the honeſt ſimplicity of the ruſtics, if it is not agreeable, is far leſs diſguſting, than the pert, affected, ill-natured airs and manners of the little half-bred gentry in little country towns.

The beauties of nature untouched by art, an air ſweet as it blows over the bloſſomed vale, peaceful hours, ſocial cheerfulneſs, domeſtic joys, rural dignity—theſe are mine in my village retreat. Nor do I regret the loſs of formal viſits, and that wretched intercourſe with little minds, which, while it wore away life in inſipidity, expoſed me to the envenomed ſhafts of unmerited detraction.

No. CLXXI. CURSORY THOUGHTS ON EPISTOLARY WRITERS.

WHEN a writer has diſtinguiſhed himſelf in his ſtudied performances, and pleaſed us in thoſe works, which he intended for our peruſal, we become intereſted in all that concerns him, and wiſh to be acquainted with his ideas, as they flowed, without any view to their publication, in the open communications of a private and friendly correſpondence. Beautiful minds, like beautiful bodies, appear graceful in an undreſs. The awe which they inſpire, when ſurrounded with all their dignity, is ſometimes more ſtriking than pleaſing; but we feel ourſelves relieved when admitted to their familiarity. We love to retire behind the ſcenes, and to obſerve the undiſguiſed appearance of thoſe, who pleaſe us, when induſtriouſly decorated for public exhibition. From this cauſe it has ariſen, that the private letters of great men have been always read with peculiar avidity.

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The Greeks, remarkable as they were for diverſity of compoſition, have not left many models in the epiſtolary ſtyle. There is no doubt but that Xenophon excelled in it, though moſt of the letters which he wrote, have either not been collected or preſerved. Thoſe of Socrates, Antiſthenes, Ariſtippus, Xenophon, Æſchines, and Philo, have never been popular. Thoſe which paſs under the name of Ariſtænetus, are of a taſte leſs reſembling the attic, than the oriental. The deſcriptions in them are poetically luxuriant, but the language is not pure, nor the ſtyle ſimple.

The epiſtles of Phalaris have been much read by the learned; but though they are curious monuments of the genius of the tyrant, they are not admirable ſpecimens of epiſtolary compoſition. They are better known from the violent diſpute they occaſioned between Bentley and Boyle, than from their intrinſic merit. In ſome part of that famous controverſy, Bentley ſays, with his uſual acrimony, that Boyle had made a bad book worſe by a bad edition of it.

Cicero, the world's great model in the oratorical and the philoſophical, is no leſs eminent in the epiſtolary ſtyle. He rivalled his great patterns, the Greeks, in eloquence and philoſophy; and he excelled them in his letters. His letters, indeed, were the genuine productions of his unaſſiſted genius, and have a grace peculiar to themſelves. Many of his other works are profeſſedly imitations; but conducted with that art which characteriſes genius, and appropriates all it handles. His letters were not ſtudied, they were the effuſions of the moment, they aroſe from the occaſion, and pleaſe from their air of truth and unaffected propriety. Whether buſineſs, pleaſure, politics, philoſophy, or conjugal and paternal affection, are their ſubjects, they are equally excellent, and always pleaſing. He wrote them without the leaſt view of their coming to the public eye, and to this circumſtance they owe a great ſhare of their merit, their freedom from affectation Near a thouſand of them remain, and furniſh abundance of hiſtorical information, at the ſame time that they exhibit the beſt models for this ſpecies of writing. They are thought not to appear to the beſt advantage in the ſpecimens, which

which Dr. Middleton has inſerted in his life of Cicero. No one was better able to do them juſtice than that great biographer; but it is ſaid, he committed the taſk of tranſlation to ſome inferior aſſiſtant.

There was an age when the letters of Pliny were preferred to thoſe of Cicero. They have, indeed, the glitter of an artificial poliſh, but they want the more captivating grace of natural beauty. They were ſtudied, and they wear the appearance of ſtudy. He who delights in elaborate and highly finiſhed compoſition, will be gratified in the peruſal of Pliny; but he will at the ſame time regret, if he has a taſte for propriety, that this labour was not beſtowed where it would have been better placed. In a philoſophical diſcourſe, or a formal harangue, we expect the interpoſition of art; but, in an epiſtle, we are better pleaſed with the genuine effuſions of nature, than with the efforts of ingenuity.

Seneca's Moral Eſſays have little right to the name of Epiſtles, with which he diſtinguiſhed them. They are little more than a collection of common-place obſervations, abounding in wit and ingenious turns, but wholly deſtitute of elegance and grace. His faults, indeed, are ſweet, as Quintilian ſaid; but it is a ſweetneſs which cloys, and can ſcarcely pleaſe any but a vitiated appetite.

After the Latin had ceaſed to be a living language, many excellent books of letters were written in it. It was the univerſal language of learning. The literati of different nations, the rude languages of which would not repay the labour of cultivation, wiſely choſe to communicate their thoughts in the pure dialect of the court of Auguſtus. Some of the earlieſt of theſe are diſgraced by the barbariſm of the times. But Petrarch ſhines amidſt the ſurrounding obſcurity. True genius, like his, was ſure to diſplay its luſtre, though it laboured under the diſadvantage of a prevailing corruption of taſte. His language is by no means a model.

Politian had juſt pretenſions to true genius. There is a warmth and vigour in his poetry, which fully proves him to have poſſeſſed the *mens divinior*. His epiſtles are elegant, but, like thoſe of Pliny, whom he imitated,

tated, they are formal and affected. Upon the whole, they are not unpleasing, and abound with beautiful language.

Erasmus, a name that shines forth with peculiar glory in the annals of literature, justly possesses the first rank among the modern epistolary writers. His style indeed is not purely Ciceronian, though it displays many of its graces. It is entirely his own, though it often rises to a level with classical excellence. He was not so scrupulously exact in his taste, as to reject a barbarous and Gothic expression, if it conveyed his ideas precisely. But he had the skill to use it with such propriety, that it acquired, in his writings, a grace and dignity. No man was better acquainted with the works of Cicero, and no man, after a few prejudices, formed in his youth, were removed, entertained a higher opinion of his beauties, or knew better how to imitate them. But he despised the sect of Ciceronians, who would scarcely admit a particle that was not to be found in their favourite author. He ridiculed them with admirable wit and eloquence, in his dialogue Ciceronianus; nor would he give countenance to so ridiculous an affectation, by any part of his writings. More studious of copiousness and variety of matter, than of a scrupulous imitation of any model, he selects the most expressive word he can find in the language, and, by a judicious composition, renders it agreeable and proper. With all their defects in point of purity of language, his letters are uncommonly entertaining; and have that spirit which genius can always exhibit, but which laborious dulness vainly imitates. There is a fund of Lucianic humour in all his more familiar writings; in his colloquies it is most conspicuous; but it is also very remarkable in many of his epistles. Had he lived in an age when polite learning was more generally encouraged and cultivated, his productions would have been models of elegance, not inferior to the boasted reliques of antiquity. But, unfortunately, he was engaged in the unpleasing disputes of pedantic theologists; and, instead of treading the flowery paths of Greek and Roman literature, for which he was adapted by nature, was obliged to toil through the thorny mazes of a barbarous,

barous, perplexed, and irrational ſyſtem of divinity. His liberal mind ſoon perceived, and as ſoon avowed, the abſurdity of the received modes and opinions; but he had too great a veneration for genuine chriſtianity, to neglect thoſe ſtudies, which his profeſſion, as a chriſtian and an eccleſiaſtic, naturally led him to cultivate. He ſaw, and in great meaſure avoided, the inelegancies which abounded in the theological writings of his times; but it was not eaſy always to be upon his guard againſt them; and his mind retained a tincture of them, as waters are polluted with the impurities through which they flow.

I omit a great number of epiſtolary writers, who had little merit of their own, and who derived all their fame from a ſervile imitation of Cicero. Among theſe is Paulus Manutius, who is ſaid to have often ſpent a month in writing a ſingle letter. We ſee, indeed, in conſequence of this ſcrupulous attention, an elegant and truly Ciceronian phraſeology; but we obſerve none of the native graces of unaffected compoſition.

Our neighbours, the French, have arrogated great merit as epiſtolary writers. Their genius and their language appear to be well adapted to excel in it. But ſome of their moſt celebrated writers have renounced the advantages which nature gave them, and have ſpoiled all the beauties of ſentiment and vivacity, by an unſeaſonable profuſion of wit. Balzac wearies his reader with the conſtant recurrence of laboured ingenuity.

Voiture abounds with beautiful thoughts expreſſed with great elegance. The language of compliment diſguſts, in other writers, by its unmeaning fameneſs and formality. He has given it the grace of delicacy. But even he, though indiſputably a fine writer, is juſtly cenſured by Bohours, for thoughts which the critic calls falſe. Like many others, he has neglected real beauties for artificial ornaments.

Our own countrymen have honourably diſtinguiſhed themſelves in this, as well as in every other kind of elegant compoſition. The epiſtolary ſtyle of Swift is thought, by many, to excel all others. It has purity, eaſe, expreſſion, and force. Pope's Letters are lively and

and delicate. Shenſtone's are much read; but it may be doubted whether they have that peculiar and ſtriking excellence, which ſhould place them among the claſſics of our country.

The late Lord Cheſterfield, though juſtly decried as a moral inſtructor, is admired as a writer of peculiar elegance. No man more cloſely and ſucceſsfully imitated the French, in every circumſtance. Like them, he writes with perſpicuity, vivacity, and that graceſulneſs which is ſure to pleaſe, and which he ſo ſtrenuouſly recommends. He is himſelf a proof of the efficacy of grace; for, with all his merit, he was certainly ſuperficial, and yet obtained a degree of fame, which more ſolid writers have ſeldom poſſeſſed.

Much has been ſaid on the epiſtolary ſtyle; as if any one ſtyle could be appropriated to the great variety of ſubjects which are treated of in letters. Eaſe, it is true, ſhould diſtinguiſh familiar letters, written on the common affairs of life; becauſe the mind is uſually at eaſe while they are compoſed. But, even in theſe, there incidentally ariſes a topic, which requires elevated expreſſion, and an inverted conſtruction. Not to raiſe the ſtyle on theſe occaſions, is to write unnaturally; for nature teaches us to expreſs animated emotions of every kind in animated language.

The impaſſioned lover writes unnaturally, if he writes with the eaſe of Sevigné. The dependent writes unnaturally to a ſuperior, in the ſtyle of familiarity. The ſuppliant writes unnaturally, if he rejects the figures dictated by diſtreſs. Converſation admits of every ſtyle but the poetic, and what are letters but written converſation? The great rule is, to follow nature, and to avoid an affected manner.

No. CLXXII. ON THE NECESSITY OF EXERCISE, AMUSEMENTS, AND AN ATTENTION TO HEALTH IN A LIFE OF STUDY. IN A LETTER.

I HAPPENED accidentally to meet a fellow-collegian, with whom, before we were ſeparated by the caprice of fortune, I was intimately acquainted. Surely it is he, ſaid I; but, alas, how changed! pale, emaciated, with hollow and lack-luſtre eye, is this my old ſchool-fellow, whoſe ruddy cheeks and cheerful countenance diſplayed health and happineſs? What can have reduced my poor friend to ſo wretched a condition? Intemperance, or ſome dreadful diſeaſe, muſt have ſtolen away his youth, and hurried him to a premature old age.

While I was thus reflecting, he paſſed me without taking notice. He ſeemed indeed to be ſo entirely wrapped up in contemplation, as to pay no regard to external objects. My curioſity and friendſhip were too much intereſted, to ſuffer him to leave me without giving ſome account of himſelf. I ſoon overtook him, and he no ſooner recogniſed me, and perceived my ſurpriſe at his appearance, than he proceeded to aſſign the cauſes of it.

"You know, my friend, ſaid he, my firſt and ſtrong-
"eſt paſſion was for literary fame. Flattered by my
"friends, and encouraged at my ſchool, I perſuaded
"myſelf I was advancing in the career of glory, and,
"with all the ardour of enthuſiaſm, devoted every
"moment of my life to the purſuit of learning. Pu-
"erile diverſions had no charms for me. A book was
"my ſole delight, my conſtant companion, and was
"never laid aſide, but while my mind was employed
"in compoſition. During my reſidence at the uni-
"verſity, I ſpent the time which my companions al-
"lotted to rural amuſements, in examining thoſe re-
"poſitories of ancient learning, the public libraries. I
"ſaw indeed the futility of ſcholaſtic logic, but a de-
"ſire to qualify myſelf for the public exerciſes, led me
"to

" to the attentive perusal of Wallis and Saunderson. " The same motive engaged me in the dreary subtil- " ties of metaphysics. Such studies engrossed the " greater part of my first three years, with little ad- " vantage and no pleasure. The fatigue would have " been intolerable, had it not sometimes been allevi- " ated by the charms of poetry. My favourite Virgil " and Horace, and every polite writer of modern times, " afforded, in their turn, an agreeable recreation. My " exercises were honourably distinguished, and praise " to an ingenuous mind is the best reward of learned " labours.

" With my character for application and sobriety " (not to boast of my attainments), I found no difficul- " ty in obtaining orders. The head of my house pro- " cured me a curacy in a small country town. Thither " I went, not without my collection of books, the use " of which I would not have foregone for a mitre. I " had no other wish than to improve myself in learn- " ing, and to perform the duty of an ecclesiastic with " decency and devotion. I was happy in the prospect " of spending my time uninterrupted by the intrusion " of my academical friends, whom youth and high " spirits would often lead to a noisy behaviour little " consistent with meditation. My want of experience " concealed from me the difficulty of pursuing the line " of conduct which inclination pointed out. I found " it was necessary, to my good reception among my pa- " rishioners, to give up the greatest part of the day to " a participation in their amusements. In vain was it " that I laboured to excel in the pulpit. There was " not a man in the place who had an idea of the dig- " nity or utility of literary excellence, and who would " not most cordially have hated even a Clarke or a Til- " lotson, if he had never been in at the death of a " hare, nor drank his bottle at the club. The parson, " in their idea of his character, was a jolly fellow in " black, who was to lead a careless life all the week, " and preach against it on Sundays. I could not bring " myself to take delight in a fox-chace, and, though " good-nature prevented me from shewing my dislike, " I could never meet any of the hunters with satisfac-

" tion.

" tion. The little pleaſure I took in the only ſociety " that was to be obtained, ſtill farther confirmed me in " my recluſe mode of life. When my reſolution ap- " peared unchangeable, I was ſuffered to live as I " pleaſed, with the character of an odd, but inoffen- " ſive man In this unmoleſted retreat, I found time " to go through a complete courſe of eccleſiaſtical hiſ- " tory. I acquired a ſufficient knowledge of the ori- " ental languages to enable me to read the Polyglott. " I wrote a great number of ſermons and theological " treatiſes, and made many corrections in the vulgar " tranſlation of the Bible. So wholly engroſſed was I " by my darling purſuits, that I ſeldom left my cham- " ber. In vain did the vernal ſun invite. The muſic " of a pack of hounds, which frequently paſſed my " window, had no charms in my ears. The rural " ſports of every kind were tedious and inſipid. To " my books I returned from every trifling avocation, " with redoubled pleaſure, and endeavoured to repay " the loſs of an hour in the day, by devoting a great " portion of the night to ſtudy.

" It is really true, that my chief motive for appli- " cation was a love of learning. Yet I will be ſo in- " genuous as to own, I ſometimes formed a wiſh, that " my ſmall ſhare of merit, if I had any, might attract " the notice of my ſuperiors. There is a time of life " when fame alone appears to be an inadequate reward " of great labour. It flatters that natural love of diſ- " tinction which we all poſſeſs, but it furniſhes no con- " venience in the time of want and infirmity. There " was in the neighbourhood a little living of one hun- " dred a year, with a houſe and garden, in a ſtyle of " decent elegance which becomes a ſcholar. The pa- " tron was the eſquire of the next pariſh, who had al- " ways treated me with ſingular reſpect. I was fooliſh " enough to ſuppoſe his regard for my character would " induce him to beſtow his benefice on me; but I found " when it became vacant, he had ſtaked and loſt the " next preſentation at a game at whiſt with a clerical " fox-hunter.

" I was at laſt taken notice of by my dioceſan. He " had heard of my indefatigable diligence, and recom-

" mended

" merded me to an eminent publiſher, as a proper per-
" ſon to make an index to a very voluminous work.
" I eagerly undertook the taſk, with a view to pleaſe
" ſo great a man, and finiſhed it in leſs than a year and
" a half. The books were printed on a ſmall letter,
" and this work did my eyes an injury which they will
" never recover; but it muſt be owned, on the other
" hand, that the bookſeller gave me in return a bank
" note of ten pounds. An index author ſeldom ac-
" quires reputation. He is indeed ſeldom known; but
" if he happens to be diſcovered, the accuracy of his
" work is, in the opinion of many, a kind of diſgrace
" to him. It ſeems to argue a degree of phlegmatic
" dulneſs and of patient labour, rarely in the power
" of genius. It will not therefore be thought wonder-
" ful that this laborious work produced no other effects
" than the injury of my eyes, and the payment of my
" taylor's bill.

" In this curacy I ſtill continue, without any proſpect
" of change, unleſs when blindneſs, occaſioned by in-
" temperate ſtudy or the infirmities of age, ſhall oblige
" me to reſign. I am not of a diſcontented diſpoſition,
" nor do I relate my condition with a deſign to crimi-
" nate others for their neglect of me. Preferment I
" never ſought by thoſe methods which the world
" agrees to be the beſt ſuited to procure it. I have
" therefore no right to complain of the want of that
" which I did not rightly purſue. My motive for this
" communication is to prevent others from incurring
" miſery by a too great attachment to objects laudable in
" themſelves. I can never diſcountenance an atten-
" tion to literature. I ſtill love it. I ſtill venerate
" thoſe that have excelled in it. But a ſincere regard
" for many of the moſt amiable and uſeful of my ſpecies,
" induces me to remind them, that they have a body
" which requires a great ſhare of their attention, and
" that no ſatisfaction ariſing from ſtudy can ulti-
" mately counterbalance the loſs of ſight, and that long
" train of nervous diſeaſes ſuperinduced by unremitted
" application.

" I mean not to excite your ſympathy: nor will I ex-
" aggerate my evils by deſcription. My appearance

" has

"has already convinced you that I am the victim of "diſeaſe. Nor will you heſitate to believe that the "ſtone, the gout, the hypochondria, which have worn "out my tender frame, were derived from an attention "unrelieved by the uſual and neceſſary relaxations.— "Had I been wiſe enough to have mounted a horſe "during the intervals of reading, and to have entered "into cheerful company at the cloſe of a thoughtful "day, I might have prolonged my favourite enjoy-"ments to a happy old age.

"I am philoſopher enough to bear with patience a "condition which I cannot alter; yet I ſometimes "think, though without the leaſt degree of envy, that "an old ſchool-fellow of mine, of a very different "turn from myſelf, is far happier. I remember I uſed "to laugh at him, and think him very ſilly, when, at "the time we were at the Univerſity together, he uſed "to miſs an ingenious lecture for the ſake of a ride, "and ſpend the three ſhillings with which I ſhould "have bought a book, in the hire of a horſe. It is "true, indeed, that he need not, and ought not, to "have neglected his mental improvement, becauſe he "had many opportunities of relaxation after the hours "of ſtudy were elapſed. Yet if I judge of his conduct "by the apparent effects of it at preſent, it appears to "me in a leſs blameable light than it uſed to do. He "is now at the age of ſixty-three, for he was ſomewhat "older than myſelf, and retains all the vigour and "alertneſs of a young man. His countenance is hale, "his limbs muſcular, and he reads the ſervice and the "news-paper, the only things he does read, without "ſpectacles.

"He ſet out in life as friendleſs as myſelf. He en-"gaged in a curacy in a ſporting country. His love "of field-diverſions ſoon introduced him to what was "called the beſt company. He poſſeſſed the external "graces of behaviour, and at the ſame time was deeply "ſkilled in horſe-fleſh, and had Bracken's Farriery by "heart. Such merits could not long paſs unrewarded. "A baronet in the neighbourhood grew fond of him, "and introduced him to his family; one of whom was "an only daughter, of no great perſonal or mental

" accompliſhments. My friend, however, admired her " fortune, and found no difficulty in obtaining her hand. " The living on which he now reſides was part of her " portion, and, though of no great value, yet it fur- " niſhes him with a pretty ſnug ſporting-box. He com- " monly reads prayers in his boots and ſpurs, while his " hunter ſtands neighing in the porch till honeſt Moſes " has twanged through his noſe the final and joyful " Amen. It is true, my old friend has no taſte, no " learning, no refinement, but he has the uſe of his " eyes, and a never-ceaſing flow of ſpirits; he can " walk as well as ever, has an excellent digeſtion, and " plenty to furniſh it with conſtant employment.

" But his example is not to be followed, ſince he " has run into an extreme, more culpable, though leſs " pernicious to himſelf than mine is to me. Far hap- " pier and wiſer the philoſophical Euphranor, who, " with the warmeſt affection for learning, reſtrained it, " as he has every other inordinate attachment, by the " rules of prudence; and by paying all the attention " which nature and reaſon require, to his body and to " his mind, has advanced the condition of both to a " high degree of attainable perfection."

No. CLXXIII. ON THE MERITS OF COWLEY AS A POET.

THE biographers of our Engliſh authors have ſometimes fallen into a miſtake, which renders the truth of their ſtory ſuſpected. Their accounts are truly panegyrics. The hero of their tales, like the lover in the romance, is adorned with every good quality. Not content to relate facts with impartiality, they extenuate what is culpable, and exaggerate all that can admit of commendation. In truth, they who have exhibited the lives of our authors, have uſually been the editors of their works; and either from a real and natural fondneſs for thoſe things on which they have beſtowed care, or from the leſs laudable motive of promoting the circulation

culation of a book in which they were intereſted, have ſpoken too highly even of thoſe who merit moderate applauſe. But it is not wonderful if the trader repreſents his own merchandize as the beſt in the market-place.

It was the lot of Cowley to be handed down to poſterity by a writer who was famous in his day for eloquence. Dr. Sprat probably undertook the office of a biographer, with a deſign to diſplay his talents in a ſpecies of oratory which the Roman rhetoricians called the demonſtrative. He diſcharged it well as an artiſt, but failed as an accurate hiſtorian. By placing Cowley in the firſt rank of poets, he has in effect degraded him from the ſubaltern ſtation which he had elſe preſerved unmoleſted. Dr. Sprat owed much of his own fame to the poet who had compared his ſtyle to the gentle and majeſtic current of the Thames; and returned the compliment, perhaps from other motives than thoſe of gratitude; for the higher Cowley was exalted, the greater honour was reflected on thoſe whom he had commended. Of this celebrated Biſhop of Rocheſter, Lord Orrery has ſaid, few men have gained a greater character for elegance and correctneſs, and few men have deſerved it leſs. And of the poet whom he praiſed, the great Dryden has with diffidence remarked, that ſomewhat of the purity of Engliſh, ſomewhat of more equal thoughts, ſomewhat of ſweetneſs in the numbers; in one word, ſomewhat of a finer turn and more lyrical verſe, is yet wanting

Whatever are his defects, no poet has been more liberally praiſed. Lord Clarendon has ſaid, he made a flight above all men; Addiſon, in his account of the Engliſh Poets, that he improved upon the Theban bard; the Duke of Buckingham upon his Tombſtone, that he was the Engliſh Pindar, the Horace, the Virgil, the Delight, the Glory, of his Times. And with reſpect to the harſhneſs of his numbers, the eloquent Sprat tells us, that if his verſes in ſome places ſeem not as ſoft and flowing as one would have them, it was his choice, and not his fault.

Such is the applauſe laviſhed on a writer who is now ſeldom read. That he could ever be eſteemed as a

pindaric poet, is a curious literary phænomenon. He totally miſtook his own genius, when he thought of imitating Pindar. He totally miſtook the genius of Pindar, when he thought his own incoherent ſentiments and numbers bore the leaſt reſemblance to the wild, yet regular ſublimity of the Theban. He neglected even thoſe forms, the ſtrophe, antiſtrophe, and epode, which even imitative dulneſs can copy. Sublime imagery, vehement pathos, poetic fire, which conſtitute the eſſence of the pindaric ode, are incompatible with witty conceits, accurate antitheſes, and vulgar expreſſion. All theſe imply the coolneſs of deliberate compoſition, or the meanneſs of a little mind; both of them moſt repugnant to the truly pindaric ode, in which all is rapturous and noble. Wit of any kind would be improperly diſplayed in ſuch compoſition; but to increaſe the abſurdity, the wit of Cowley is often falſe.

If the end of poetry is to pleaſe, harmony of verſe is eſſential to poetry, for, without it, poetry cannot pleaſe. It is not poſſible, that any whoſe ear has been attuned to the melody of good compoſition, ſhould read a ſingle ode of Cowley without being ſhocked with diſcord. There is often nothing left but the jingle at the end to diſtinguiſh poems renowned for their ſublimity, from affected proſe. Such poetry may juſtly incur the ridiculous title of Proſe run mad.

Yet is there ſometimes interwoven a purple patch, as Horace calls it, a fine expreſſion, a truly poetical thought, an harmonious couplet; but it occurs not often enough to repay the reader for the toilſome taſk of wading through a tedious aſſemblage of diſproportioned and diſcordant ſtanzas. Of ſuch conſiſt his Pindarics; which, though they procured him the greateſt ſhare of his reputation, deſerved it leaſt. Many of his other poems, if we conſider the rude ſtate of verſification, and the bad taſte of the times, have great merit; and had he made Tibullus his model, inſtead of Pindar, his claim to the firſt rank of poets had not been called in queſtion. The tenderneſs of love, and the ſoft language of complaint, were adapted to his genius. But he choſe to tread in the footſteps of Alcæus, as he

ſays

says himself, who, according to the Halicarnassian, combined the μεγαλοφυες και ηδυ, or adopted the grand, as well as the sweet.

That he had a taste for Latin poetry, and wrote in it with elegance, the well-known Epitaph on himself, upon his retirement, and an admirable imitation of Horace, are full proofs. But, surely, his rhetorical biographer makes use of the figure hyperbole, when he affirms that Cowley has excelled the Romans themselves. He was inferior to many a writer of less fame in the Musæ Anglicanæ. But still he had great merit; and I must confess I have read his Latin verses with more pleasure, than any of his English can afford.

But, after all the honours that have been accumulated on his name as a poet, his great merit consisted in prosaic composition. In this department he is an elegant, a pleasing, a judicious writer. His love of retirement and contemplation qualified him for a moralist; and it is much to be lamented, that he did not devote a greater part of his time to a kind of writing which appeared natural to him, and in which he excelled. The language of his heart shines forth in the little he has left us, and we cannot but love it.

Much more of that language would have descended to posterity, if his friends, from a mistaken opinion of propriety, had not suppressed his private letters. Dr. Sprat and Mr. Clifford were avowedly possessed of many; and the very reason assigned by the biographer, for their suppression, should have operated in their publication. The letters that pass between particular friends, says he, if they are written as they ought to be, that is, I suppose, in an artless manner, can scarcely ever be fit to see the light. How great an injury would polite learning have sustained, if the friends of Cicero had thought like Sprat and Clifford!

They would better have consulted the reputation of the poet, had they pronounced the Pindarics unfit to see the light. Editors, in general, would act more honourably, in exhibiting only the best of their author's productions, than in praising, as well as publishing, all that has fallen from his pen. But, in truth, to have left out any part of his poems, would, in that age, have

have been an unpardonable omiſſion; for who ſhould dare to mutilate a Pindar?

Time, the great arbiter of reputation, has already begun to ſtrip the poet of his borrowed honours. A critic, whoſe genius and judgment keep pace with each other, and who illuminates every ſubject on which he treats, has allotted Cowley his juſt ſpecies of praiſe, and has given the world, in a judicious ſelection of his works, all that they poſſeſſed of real value.

Of theſe the proſe forms a principal part. It is written in a ſtyle ſufficiently flowing to prove that Cowley was not deſtitute of a muſical ear; a circumſtance which countenances the opinion of thoſe who maintain that he affected a rugged ſtyle. Was it a compliance with the taſte of the age, that induced him to affect deformity? Unfortunate compliance with a deplorable taſte. He, as well as they whom he imitated, Donne and Jonſon, were unqueſtionably poſſeſſed of great learning and ingenuity; but they all neglected the graces of compoſition, and will, therefore, ſoon be numbered among thoſe once celebrated writers, whoſe utility now conſiſts in filling a vacancy on the upper ſhelf of ſome duſty and deſerted library.

No. CLXXIV. CURSORY AND GENERAL HINTS ON THE CHOICE OF BOOKS.

THE ſcarcity of Books, a few centuries ago, was the principal obſtacle to the advancement of learning. The multitude of them is become, in the preſent age, ſcarcely leſs injurious to its intereſts, by diſtracting the ſtudent in his choice, and by diffuſing an incorrect and undiſtinguiſhing taſte.

To read all books on all ſubjects, would require an uninterrupted attention during the longeſt life even of an Antediluvian. To read only the moſt celebrated, written in a few languages, is an employment ſufficient

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to fill up every hour of laborious application. For the ſake then of ſaving time, and of directing the judgment of the inexperienced, it becomes an uſeful attempt to ſuggeſt ſome general hints, which may tend to facilitate ſelection.

One rule of the greateſt conſequence is, to read only or chiefly the original treatiſes in all the various departments of ſcience, and of literature. Nearly the ſame ſpace of time, though not the ſame degree of attention, is neceſſary to peruſe the faint copies of imitative induſtry, as would appropriate to the ſtudent the ſolid productions of native genius. This rule is more particularly to be obſerved on the firſt entrance on ſtudy. The foundation muſt be laid deep, and formed of ſolid materials. The ſuperſtructure will often admit ſlight and ſuperficial appendages. When we have ſtudied the fine reliques of thoſe who have lived before us, we may derive much pleaſure from attending to the additional labours of contemporary genius. But to begin with theſe is to found, like the fool recorded in the Goſpel, an edifice in the ſand.

It were no leſs preſumptuous than ſuperfluous to addreſs directions in the choice of authors, to the learned. But we may venture, without arrogance, to point out a few to the notice of the young and ingenuous pupil, with a deſign to abbreviate or facilitate his labour.

He who is entering on the ſtudy of divinity, will naturally devote his firſt attention to the ſcriptures. The original language of the Old Teſtament is often unknown even to the learned and ingenious; and notwithſtanding what ſome critics have, as it were, officially obſerved on the ſubject, the neglect of it, though culpable, is ſeldom attended with much diſadvantage. But the knowledge of Greek is indiſpenſably neceſſary, if theology is purſued as a profeſſion.

The prophetical parts will claim the greateſt ſhare of attention in the peruſal of the Old Teſtament. Dr. Hurd's Introduction to the Study of the Prophecies will be a ſufficient guide for ſubſequent application to them. To illuſtrate the New Teſtament, it will be proper to have recourſe to Percy's Key to it, to Trapp's Notes, to Locke on the Epiſtles, and to Mede on the Apocalypſe. With

With theſe aſſiſtances the ſtudent, who is not deficient in natural ability, will make a competent proficiency, even though he ſhould totally neglect thoſe myriads of treatiſes which have rendered the body of divinity, as it is called, enormous beyond comprehenſion.

The ſtudent in phyſic is commonly introduced to the knowledge of it by a public lecturer, who ſuperintends, or at leaſt directs, his courſe of reading. Natural and experimental ſcience, in all their ramifications, are in ſome degree requiſite to his further advancement. Theſe alone will indeed render him ingenious in his cloſet, but will avail little at the bedſide without other aid. To theſe muſt be added a moſt accurate obſervation of the human frame in all its fluctuations of health, diſeaſe, and convaleſcence. The reading of caſes ſtrictly delineated, is found to be the beſt ſuccedaneum where actual practice and obſervation are precluded. Syſtem is in general deluſive and inſufficient.

To the profeſſed lawyer, ſcarcely any book on the ſubject of law is unintereſting or uſeleſs. But he who purſues the ſtudy merely as an accompliſhment in a comprehenſive plan of education, will find all the neceſſary lights in the volumes of Grotius, Puffendorf, Burn, and Blackſtone.

He who wiſhes to gain a complete knowledge of grammar, may ſucceed in his attempt without loading his memory with the works of Priſcian, or of thoſe thouſands who have toiléd in this circumſcribed province. Let him, after having ſtudied grammatically the elements of Latin and Greek, digeſt the Hermes of Harris, and the Introduction of Lowth.

The art of rhetoric never yet formed an Engliſh orator. It is one of thoſe artificial aſſiſtances of genius, which genius wants not, and of which dulneſs can little avail itſelf. But as there are excellent books written on it, the general ſcholar muſt pay it his attention. Let him then read Cicero on the Orator, and Quintilian's Inſtitutes, and he need not trouble himſelf with thoſe meagre treatiſes which give a hard name to the natural modes of expreſſion, and teach us that, like Hudibras, we cannot open our mouths, but out there flies a trope.

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He who is impelled by neceſſity or inclination to attend to logic, may with propriety neglect all the rubbiſh of the ſchools, and, next to the Stagyrite himſelf, ſtudy only the works of Saunderſon, Wallis, Watts, and Harris.

If the barren field of metaphyſics is ever capable of repaying the toil of cultivation, it can only be when the attention is confined to ſuch authors as Locke, Hutcheſon, and Beattie.

If ethics are to be conſidered in the ſyſtematical method of a ſcience, the moral philoſophy of Hutcheſon may be recommended as one of the cleareſt, the moſt elegant, and the conciſeſt treatiſes that have appeared upon them. The numerous writers who have fabricated fanciful and deſtructive ſyſtems, may be ſuffered to ſink in the gulph of oblivion never to emerge.

In natural philoſophy, the airy fabrics of hypothetical viſions ought not to claim the attention of a moment. The ſun of Newton has abſorbed the radiance of all other luminaries in this department. His works and thoſe of his followers will, of courſe, ſuperſede the infinite number of folios, which, to uſe the expreſſions of Horace, may be ſent to wrap up frankincenſe and perfumes, the only way in which they can now be uſeful. He to whom the works of the great philoſopher are unintelligible, may acquieſce with ſecurity in the illuſtrations of Pemberton and Rowning. The lover of natural hiſtory, zoology, and botany, will not be at a loſs in the ſelection of books, while fame reſounds the names of Buffon, of Pennant, of Linnæus. The Romances of Pliny and his imitators will have no charms with the lover of truth.

To the claſſical ſcholar, the proper books are uſually pointed out by the ſuperintendants of his education; and when once he has taſted them, his own cultivated feelings will direct him in the choice of modern productions. Every one knows who were the beſt authors in the Auguſtan age; and the chief caution neceſſary is, that the text of a Virgil, a Horace, an Ovid, may not be loſt in the attention given to the tedious comments of a few Dutchmen. I have known thoſe who have toiled through the claſſics, *cum notis variorum*, much

less acquainted with them than he who never read them but in Sandby's edition. In attending to Burman and Heinsius, they overlooked the text; which was lost like a jewel in a dunghill. These laborious annotators explain what needs not explanation, and, with a little critical knavery, pass by a real difficulty without notice. I am convinced that a taste for the classics is rather impeded than promoted by the Dauphin edition, in which boys are initiated; but in which the words of the author are choaked, like wholesome plants among weeds, by the notes and interpretation. To be possessed of comments on the classics is however desirable, for difficulties will sometimes occur which at first sight perplex the most ingenious; but I should prefer, for common reading, such editions as that of Jones's Horace.

Directions for the formation of the lady's library have often been wanted by those, who, with an inclination for the elegant amusement of reading, have been unable to indulge it without danger, because they had none to guide them in their choice. In my humble opinion, the following books might have a place in it, not only without hazard of ill consequences, but with great advantage to taste, and to that personal beauty which arises from mental. All the periodical publications of repute that have been written on the model of the Spectator, Rollin's Works, Plutarch's Lives, Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, and the most esteemed historians of their own country, may be strongly recommended. To these, for the sake of imbibing a classical taste, may be added the best translations of the antients, Pope's Homer, Dryden's Virgil, and Melmoth's Pliny. If French books are required, those of Boileau, Fontenelle, Le Pluche, and some select pieces of Voltaire and Rousseau, may with propriety be admitted. Novels, it is feared, will not be dispensed with: Those then of Richardson and Fielding are allowed, yet not without reluctance. Every thing indelicate will of course be excluded; but perhaps there is not less danger in works called sentimental. They attack the heart more successfully, because more cautiously. Religious books will find a place, but not without restriction; for there is a species of devotional composition,

ſition, which, by inflaming the paſſions and imagination, contributes to corruption, while it ſeems to promote the warmeſt piety. From their ſenſibility of heart and warmth of fancy, the ſofter ſex is ſuppoſed to be moſt inclined to admit the errors of myſtics and enthuſiaſts.

No. CLXXV. CURSORY REMARKS ON THE ODYSSEY, ON POPE'S TRANSLATION, MR. SPENCE'S ESSAY, &c.

IT is generally agreed, that the Odyſſey is inferior to the Iliad. It is thought by Longinus, as well as by other critics, to have been the production of Homer's old age, when it may reaſonably be ſuppoſed the ardour of his genius was in ſome degree abated. "In the "Odyſſey," ſays that critic, "he may be juſtly ſaid "to reſemble the ſetting ſun, whoſe grandeur ſtill re-"mains without the original heat of his beams. Like "the ocean, whoſe very ſhores, when deſerted by the "tide, mark out how wide it ſometimes flows; ſo "Homer's genius, when ebbing into all thoſe fabulous "and incredible ramblings of Ulyſſes, ſhews plainly "how ſublime it once had been. I am ſpeaking of "old age, but it is the old age of Homer."

It is certain, that if the Odyſſey is not to be placed in the ſame rank with the Iliad, ſo neither ought it to obtain ſo low a claſs as to be overlooked and diſregarded. It has, however, been neglected by the moderns, and they who have been able to repeat the Iliad, have ſcarcely deigned to read the Odyſſey. Every ſchool-boy is acquainted with the anger of Achilles and its conſequences, while he neither knows nor is ſolicitous to learn the adventures of the wiſe Ulyſſes: though wiſdom, it may be ſuppoſed, would be commonly a better model for his imitation than valour.

An ingenious writer has endeavoured to vindicate the Odyſſey from the neglect in which it has long lain; but a prepoſſeſſion in favour of eſtabliſhed cuſtoms, has hitherto

therto prevented our public ſchools from ſubſtituting it in the room of the Iliad. That the Iliad ſhould be neglected is not indeed to be wiſhed, but that it ſhould engroſs our whole attention, to the utter excluſion of the Odyſſey, is certainly unreaſonable.

The Iliad preſents us with a rough proſpect, like that of high mountains, craggy rocks, and foaming cataracts; while the Odyſſey exhibits a ſofter ſcene, and ſuggeſts ideas ſimilar to thoſe which ariſe from the landſcape, where all is mild, ſerene, and beautiful. The one is like the pictures of Pouſſin, the other like thoſe of Claude Lorain. A reader admires the Iliad, but he loves the Odyſſey.

The works of Homer appeared ſo early in the world, and ſince their appearance have been ſo frequently praiſed and illuſtrated, that at this late period it is not neceſſary to add to the general panegyric. Suffice it to recommend the peruſal of a few authors, which may clear the way to the ſtudy of the Odyſſey. Among theſe, are the papers in the Adventurer on this ſubject, Pope's Notes to his Tranſlation, and above all Mr. Spence's very elegant and ingenious Eſſay. As to the Tranſlation itſelf, it abounds with faults and abſurdities. Without derogating from the merit of Pope as an original poet, we may venture to pronounce his Odyſſey a paraphraſe, rather than a juſt tranſlation of Homer. The copy no more reſembles the picture, than the portrait on a ſign-poſt uſually reſembles the perſonage intended to be exhibited. The chief beauty of Homer is ſimplicity, which, in the Tranſlation, is ſacrificed to a gaudy glare and artificial embelliſhments. As a poem conſidered by itſelf, it has many beautiful paſſages; but as a tranſlation, it is perhaps unworthy the reputation it has obtained.

To cenſure ſo celebrated a name, might appear arrogant in an individual, were he not ſupported by many and judicious critics. Mr. Spence, whoſe opinion is deciſive, and, *inſtar omnium*, points out defects in Pope's Tranſlation, which could never have eſcaped ſo great a poet but from haſte and wearineſs. In this work, Pope was aſſiſted by inferior writers; but as the whole is publiſhed under his name, he will ever be anſwerable

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for its faults. The translation of the Iliad, though a very excellent model of versification, exhibits not a just picture of the simple, yet magnificent, Mæonian.

Mr. Spence's Essay, at the same time that it will exhibit the deformities of the Translation, will inspire a taste for the beauties of the original; and, indeed, the general remarks, which are interspersed with the greatest judgment and elegance, will contribute to teach a just method of criticism in almost every species of poetry.

Mr. Spence was a truly classical writer. He was no less amiable in his manners than pleasing in his productions. That he chiefly wrote in dialogue is to be lamented; for that form, where the persons are fictitious, has seldom been approved in England, though it has often succeeded in France.

No. CLXXVI. THOUGHTS ON THE OEDIPUS TYRANNUS OF SOPHOCLES, AND SEVERAL CIRCUMSTANCES RESPECTING THE GRECIAN DRAMA.

OF the three Greek dramatic poets, Sophocles is the most celebrated; and of the productions of Sophocles, the Oedipus Tyrannus is the most excellent. It has stood the test of the severest criticism. The unities of time, place, and action, are inviolably preserved: and while the Tragedy satisfies the critic, who judges it by the laws of Aristotle, it pleases the common reader and spectator, who forms his opinion from the feelings of his nature. Never was there a tale more affecting than that of Oedipus, and never was it told more pathetically than by Sophocles. Many a tear has it excited from an Athenian audience, whose hearts were ever finely susceptible of the sentiments of humanity: but the best translation of it would not equally please in a modern theatre. Many other causes of its failure may be assigned, besides that simplicity, artlessness, and incomplexity

complexity of fable, which the taste of the moderns is too much vitiated to relish.

In the first place, it must be considered, that every original composition must lose something of its beauty from the best translation. It is a common remark, that the spirit of an author, like that of some essences, evaporates by transfusion. Foreign manners, and foreign customs, are seldom understood by a common audience, and as seldom approved. The majority of an English audience are unacquainted with antient learning, and can take no pleasure in the representation of men and things which have not fallen under their notice. Add to this, that they love to see Tragedies formed on their own histories, or on histories in which they are in some manner nearly interested. When Shakespeare's historical dramas are represented, they feel as Englishmen in every event; they take part with their Edwards and Henries, as friends and fellow-countrymen; they glory in their successes, and sympathize with their misfortunes. To a similar circumstance may part of the applause, which the Athenians bestowed on this Tragedy of Sophocles, be attributed; for Oedipus was king of a neighbouring country, with which the Athenians were always intimately connected either in war or peace.

These considerations should teach us to content ourselves with admiring Sophocles in the closet, without attempting to obtrude him on the stage, which must always accommodate itself to the taste of the times, whether unreasonable or just, consistent or capricious.

In truth, the warmest admirer of antient Greek poetry must acknowledge a barrenness of invention in the choice of subjects. The Trojan war, and the misfortunes of the Theban king, are almost the only sources from which those great masters of composition, Homer, Æschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles, have derived their subject matter. They have, indeed, embellished these little parts of history with all the fire of imagination and melody of poetry; but is it not strange, that in a country like Greece, where the restless spirit of military virtue was continually forming noble designs, and atchieving glorious exploits, the poets could discover no illustrious deed worthy of being painted in never-fading colours, but

but the worn-out ſtories of a wooden horſe, and a Sphinx's riddle? It is difficult for an age like the preſent, which hungers and thirſts after novelty, to conceive that an audience could ſit with patience during the recital of a ſtory which all muſt have heard a thouſand times; eſpecially as it was unadorned with the meretricious artifices of players, with thunder and lightning, hail and rain, tolling bells, and tinſel garments.

But the ſameneſs of the ſtory in the Grecian poets became agreeable to the audience, through that veneration which every thing that bears a mark of antiquity demands. That the ſtory on which a dramatic poem is founded, ſhould not be of modern date, has, I think, been laid down as a rule. Nor is it the precept of an arbitrary critic, but is juſtified by nature and reaſon: Imagination always exceeds reality. The vulgar could never prevail upon themſelves to look on ſcenes, to the reality of which they have been eye-witneſſes, with the ſame ardour as on thoſe which they have received from their anceſtors, and have painted with the ſtrongeſt colours on their fancy. In obedience to this rule, the Greek poets took their ſubjects from antient facts univerſally known, believed, and admired: and the audience entered the theatre, to behold a lively repreſentation of the picture already formed in their own imagination.

A modern reader has not a preparatory diſpoſition of mind neceſſary to receive all that pleaſure from theſe compoſitions, which tranſported an antient Greek. He does not glow with that patriotic ardour which he would feel on reading glorious deeds of a fellow-countryman, when Homer repreſents a hero breaking the Trojan phalanx and encountering a Hector. He does not conſider an antient Theban or Athenian involved in the guilt of undeſigned parricide or inceſt, nearly enough connected with him to excite his ſympathy in a violent degree: but all theſe feelings in a Grecian audience, occaſioned by a Grecian ſufferer, account for that uncommon delight which they took in their dramatic repreſentations, and for their freedom from that ſatiety which might otherwiſe have been occaſioned by a ſimple and reiterated tale.

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An Engliſh audience has lately ſhewn itſelf not ſo averſe from the antient Tragedy, as was expected, by its favourable reception of Elfrida and Caractacus, written on the Grecian model: but, perhaps, this event is not ſo much to be attributed to the revival of the refined taſte of an Attic audience, as to the inſatiable avidity of ſomething new. The Engliſh are as fond of the καινον τι in literature, as the Athenians were in politics: but, whether caprice or reaſon, whether taſte or faſhion, gave them a favourable reception on the Engliſh ſtage, it is certain that Elfrida and Caractacus are elegant poems, formed exactly on the antient model, and may be read with great advantage by thoſe who wiſh to entertain a juſt idea of the Greek Tragedy without a knowledge of the language.

No. CLXXVII. CURSORY REMARKS ON SOME OF THE MINOR ENGLISH POETS.

WE are told in the epiſtle to the Piſos, that poetical mediocrity is intolerable; yet we find that Poets, of inferior merit as well as fame, are read with pleaſure.

It is true, indeed, that the loudeſt melody of the grove is poured forth by the lark, the blackbird, the thruſh, and the nightingale; but it is no leſs true, that their pauſes are often filled by the ſweet warblings of the linnet and the red-breaſt. The lofty cedar that waves on the ſummit of the poetic mountain, ſeems to overſhadow, and exclude, by its luxuriance, all other vegetation. He, however, who approaches it, will find many a violet and primroſe ſpringing at its root. He will often diſcover, amid a plentiful growth of weeds, a modeſt flowret lifting its humble head, and becoming more beautiful by ſeeming to conceal the native ſweetneſs of its odour, and the luſtre of its hues.

The firſt dignities in the commonwealth of letters are pre-occupied by ſuch writers as Spenſer, Milton, Dryden,

den, and Pope; but, at the same time, the numerous subaltern stations are frequently filled with honour.

Many Poets of original beauty were in their own times so obscure as to be now totally unknown. Such are the authors of our most popular ballads, the general reception of which is a proof of their excellence, more convincing than the decisions of criticism. The learned Poet has commonly owed much of his excellence to imitation; but the ballad-writer drew only from his own resources when he sung the wild wood-notes of nature. Their metre often possesses a kind of harmony quite different from classical versification, indeed, yet at the same time pleasing to the uncorrupted ear.

Of Poets once known and admired, several are fallen into total disrepute. Drayton was honoured by a commentator who must have given fame to any writer. If Selden's taste was equal to his learning, Drayton is indeed most highly distinguished. The Polyolbion is, however, no more read; and the slow length of the tedious alexandrine in which it is written, will prevent its revival, as it has hastened its oblivion.

The Gondibert of D'Avenant has been the subject of critical controversy from the time of its publication. Its plan was originally defended by the great Hobbes, and its execution has been greatly praised. Yet few have attended to it with any pleasure, and still fewer have had a degree of patience sufficient to bear them through the perusal of it. The truth is, the stanza which he adopted, is better suited to elegiac than to heroic poetry. A beautifully descriptive passage, interspersed in the course of two or three hundred lines, will not alleviate the tedium of the rest; as an occasional flash of lightning cannot illuminate the continued gloominess of an extensive prospect.

For the honour of English literature, most of the poetical productions which were admired in the reign of Charles, should now be consigned to everlasting oblivion. They display, indeed, a sportive licentiousness of fancy, but they are incorrect beyond the example of any age. Some of the best poets of the times, among whom were Mulgrave, Dorset, and Roscommon, though possessed of wit and taste, produced nothing worthy of immortality.

immortality. The morals of the age were as licentious as the taſte; and the love of pleaſure introduced an indolence, which admitted not an application ſufficient to give the laſt poliſh of correct elegance.

The ſtudy of the ancients, and of the French, has gradually refined the national taſte to a degree of faſtidious delicacy; and writers who have poſſeſſed claſſical beauty have been read with admiration, though they have had nothing to recommend them to the notice of a Charles the Second or a Sedley.

The number of minor poets who diſplayed great merit, yet who ſeem to have derived it all from imitation, is too tedious to enumerate. Philips and his friend Smith were correct and claſſical in a degree ſuperior to their contemporaries. Philips has performed the taſk of imitation, with an accuracy of reſemblance ſcarcely equalled by any of his followers but Browne. The Phædra and Hippolitus of Smith has ever been eſteemed a fine poem, and the beauty of the ſtyle and harmony of the verſe induce us to regret that he lived to finiſh ſo few productions.

Within the ſpace of half the laſt century, a deſire to imitate the excellent models of our more celebrated bards, has crowded the middle ranks with a multitude too great to obtain, even for the deſerving individual, any very diſtinguiſhed fame. One Poet has ariſen after another, and ſupplanted him as the ſucceeding wave ſeems to ſwallow up the wave that went before. Moſt of them have exhibited an harmonious verſification, and have ſelected a profuſion of ſpendid expreſſions; but have in general been deficient in that noble fire, and thoſe ſimple graces, which mark originality of genius. They are, however, read with pleaſure, and ſweetly fill up the intervals of avocation among the buſy and commercial world, who are not acquainted with the Greeks and Romans, and with whom novelty often poſſeſſes the charm of beauty.

There is a force and ſolemnity in the poems of Tickell, which at leaſt place him on a level with his patron as a poet. His Colin and Lucy is one of the moſt ſweetly pathetic poems in the language.

Broome,

Broome, though honourably associated with Pope in the work of translation, seems to have had scarcely any other merit than this to bear him down the stream of time.

Trapp wrote Latin verse with elegance, and was a good critic; but it has been observed of his Virgil, that he had done wisely to have stopped at his preface.

The genius of Collins seems in some measure to have resembled that of Tickell. Dignity, solemnity, and pathos, are the striking features of his compositions. None but a true poet could have written the song over Fidele in Shakespeare's Cymbeline.

The English Tibullus, Hammond, has written truly elegant verse; but I know not whether his representations greatly affect the heart, though they are approved by the judgment and imagination. They have, however, served as patterns for the love sick nymphs and swains who delight in giving vent to their passion in the language of poetry.

Love and its effects were beautifully described by the elegantly sensible Lord Lyttelton. To assert that he was remarkable for poetical genius, were to lessen, by endeavouring to exaggerate, his praise. Force, fire, and an exuberance of invention, were not his excellences; but that equable beauty of sentiment and diction, which results from an elegant mind. The graces distinguish his compositions, as the virtues marked his honourable life.

Moore's Fables display indubitable marks of genius; but he wants the simplicity of Gay and Fontaine. He shews, however, a talent for description, which would have shone in the higher kinds of poetry; and a delicacy of mind, which, it might be supposed, could be acquired only in a higher sphere than that in which he was born.

Genius and learning were possessed in a very eminent degree by Merrick. He had that peculiar kind of genius which qualified him to excel in the department of sacred poetry. It is to be wished, that his version of the Psalms were adopted in churches, not only in the place of Sternhold and Hopkins, but of Brady and Tate.

Tate. Such an event would be no leſs advantageous to piety, than to taſte.

No. CLXXVIII. CURSORY AND UNCONNECTED REMARKS ON SOME OF THE MINOR GREEK POETS.

THE intrinſic graces of the claſſic writers have charmed every mind which was ſuſceptible of the beauties of ſpirit, taſte, and elegance. Since the revival of learning, innumerable critics have employed themſelves in diſplaying the beauties which they felt, or in removing the difficulties and obſtructions which retarded their progreſs in the peruſal of the antients. At preſent, there is ſcarcely any room for criticiſm on the antients; and the moſt laborious Commentator finds, with regret, his profoundeſt reſearches, and his acuteſt remarks, anticipated by the lucubrations of former critics: but as there is ſcarcely a greater difference between the features of the face, than between the faculties of the mind in different men, and as objects muſt ſtrike various feelings in various manners, the works of taſte and genius may, on different reviews, furniſh inexhauſtible matter for critical obſervation. Upon this principle, authors, of the preſent age, venture to add to the labours of their predeceſſors, without fearing or incurring the imputation of vanity or impertinence.

The preſent remarks ſhall be confined to ſome of the Greek Minor Poets, without minutely attending to chronological or any other order.

In the union of dignity with ſweetneſs, of melody with ſtrength, the Greek is better adapted to beautiful compoſition, than any modern language. The Italian has all its ſoftneſs, but wants its force. The French poſſeſſes elegance and expreſſion, but is deficient in ſound and dignity. The Engliſh is ſtrong, nervous, flowery, fit for animated oratory and enthuſiaſtic poetry, but abounds with Saxon monoſyllables, ill adapted to expreſs

expreſs the muſic of mellifluous cadence. To compare the Dutch and the German with the language of Athens, were to compare the jarring noiſe of grating iron, with the ſoft warblings of the flute. The other languages of Europe are equally unfit for harmonious modulation, and indeed cannot properly be examined in this place, as the people, who ſpeak them, have not yet diſtinguiſhed themſelves by any writings truly claſſical.

The Greek Epigram naturally falls firſt under our preſent conſideration. Of theſe little compoſitions, which owe their origin to Greece, none can be inſenſible of the beauty, whoſe taſte is not vitiated by the leſs delicate wit of the modern Epigrammatiſt. Indeed, to reliſh the ſimple graces of the Greek Epigram, the taſte muſt not be formed upon the model even of the celebrated Martial. Among the Latin poets, Catullus approaches neareſt to the Greeks in this ſpecies of compoſition.

The Anthologiæ, ſtill extant, are written by various authors, and there are ſcarcely ſufficient Epigrams of any one, to diſcriminate his manner from that of others. Suffice it to remark in general, that their beauty does not often conſiſt in a point, or witty conceit, but in a ſimplicity of thought, and a ſweetneſs of language.

The golden verſes of Pythagoras, though not remarkable for ſplendor of diction, or flowing verſification, are yet highly beautiful in the conciſe and forcible mode of inculcating morality, and virtues almoſt Chriſtian. The earlier philoſophers of Greece conveyed their tenets in verſe, not ſo much becauſe they aſpired to the character of poets, as becauſe precepts, delivered in metre, were more eaſily retained in the memory of their diſciples. Pythagoras has compriſed every neceſſary rule for the conduct of life in this little poem, and he that commits it to memory, will not want a guide to direct his behaviour under any event: but though the morality of theſe verſes is their more valuable beauty, yet are they by no means deſtitute of poetical merit.

That generoſity of ſoul, which ever accompanies true genius, has induced the poets and philoſophers, of all ages, to ſtand forth in the cauſe of liberty. Alcæus, of whoſe merits from the monuments of antiquity we may form

form the moſt exalted idea, firſt raiſed himſelf to eminence by a poem, intituled Staſiotica, a violent invective againſt Pittacus, at that time the tyrant of Athens. It has not eſcaped the general wreck, and we have only a few broken ſpecimens of this celebrated writer's works preſerved by the antient grammarians. We muſt, therefore, be contented to learn his character from the judicious Quintilian, and the learned Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus: the former of whom aſſerts, that he was conciſe, ſublime, accurate, and in many reſpects reſembled Homer; the latter, that he had a grandeur, brevity, and ſweetneſs, equally blended throughout all his compoſitions.

Steſichorus, according to Quintilian, was remarkable for ſtrength of genius. He gave to lyric poetry, all the ſolemnity of the Epopœa. Had he known how to reſtrain the impetuoſity of his genius, it is ſaid, he would have rivalled Homer: but unfortunately, the noble warmth of his temper urged him beyond the bounds of juſt writing, and he ſeems to have failed of excellence by a redundancy of beauties.

The fragments of Menander are ſufficiently excellent to induce every votary of learning to regret the loſs of his works. Some indeed have thought, that time never gave a greater blow to polite literature, than in the deſtruction of the Comedies of Menander: but as Terence has preſerved his ſpirit and his ſtyle, perhaps the want of the original is compenſated by the exact copyings of that elegant author. Quintilian, from whoſe judgment there is ſcarcely an appeal, has repreſented Menander as alone ſufficient to form our taſte and ſtyle. The few remains, preſerved by Stobæus, whether the beauty of the ſentiments, or the purity of the diction, be regarded, muſt be pronounced uncommonly excellent. They are, however, too generally known to require illuſtration.

Simonides is characteriſed by Longinus, as a poet remarkable for the pathetic. Of his writings, very few have ſurvived the injuries of time. The little poem on Danäe, is, however, ſufficient to juſtify the judgment of Longinus. Nothing can be more delicately tender, or more exquiſitely pathetic. There is ſomething inexpreſſibly

preſſibly pleaſing to the mind, in the repreſentation of a mother addreſſing a ſleeping infant unconſcious of its danger, with all the endearing blandiſhments of maternal fondneſs.

The other remarkable poem of this author, which time has ſpared, is of a very different kind. It is a ſatire on Women, and is well known by a proſaic tranſlation of it, inſerted in the Eſſays of a celebrated modern writer.

Alcman of Laconia is another melancholy inſtance of the depredations which the hand of Time has made on the moſt valuable works of antiquity. Of this author, once celebrated throughout Greece, quoted by the learned, and repeated by the fair, ſcarcely the name is known in the preſent age. Athenæus, Hephæſtion, the ſcholiaſt on Pindar, Euſtathius, and Plutarch, have vindicated him from abſolute oblivion, by preſerving a few of his fragments. Love verſes, which ſince his time have employed ſome of the greateſt writers, and have been admired by the moſt ſenſible readers, were of his invention. All who preceded him had invariably written in Hexameter. He ſubjoined the elegiac verſe, and may juſtly claim the honour of having invented that ſpecies of poetry, which Ovid and the other Latin elegiac Writers have ſince advanced to a moſt pleaſing ſpecies of compoſition.

Archilochus wrote iambics and elegiacs; the former, ſatirical; the latter, amorous. That he ſucceeded in his attempts, we have ſufficient reaſon to conclude from the teſtimonies of the greateſt critics of antiquity, Horace and Longinus. There is not enough of him remaining, to enable us to form a judgment of the impartiality of their deciſion, and we muſt be contented to acquieſce in their authority.

Lucian ſays, in one of his Dialogues, that the poets have given Jupiter many of his moſt pompous epithets, merely for the ſake of a ſonorous word to fill up a verſe. The hymns of Orpheus abound with theſe expletives; and the reader is often diſguſted with ſounding verſe almoſt deſtitute of ſenſe. If, however, they were compoſed for muſic, they may paſs uncenſured by ſome: for it ſeems to have been generally and moſt abſurdly agreed, and it

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is obſervable at this day, that very little attention is to be paid to the words of Operas, Odes, and Songs, which are written merely for muſic. The poems of Orpheus, if thoſe which are extant are like all his productions, would certainly move no ſtones. What has been ſaid of the hymns of this poet, may be extended to many other Greek compoſitions of the ſame ſpecies. General cenſure will, however, ſeldom be juſt, and it muſt be confeſſed, that there are ſome among them, particularly thoſe of Callimachus, truly ſublime and beautiful.

There was a ſpecies of poetry among the Athenians, which, in ſome meaſure, reſembled many of our Engliſh ballads. At the approach of a war, or after a victory or defeat, the poets and ſtateſmen uſually diſperſed among the people ſome ſhort compoſition, which tended to animate them with courage, or to inſpire them with joy. Solon, the wiſe legiſlator of Athens, was too well acquainted with the power of poetry over the human heart, to neglect this efficacious method of enforcing his laws, and propagating his inſtitutions among the lower ranks of the Athenians. There are ſtill extant ſome of his pieces, which bear internal marks of having been purpoſely written to give the people a paſſion for liberty, to inſpire them with a love of virtue, and to teach them obedience to the laws. They are, indeed, written in the elegiac meaſure, but have nothing of the ſoft amorous ſtrain which diſtinguiſhes the Ovidian elegy. They are manly, moral, and ſevere. By theſe, it is a well known fact, the Athenians were animated to reſume a war which they had dropt in deſpair; and in conſequence of the ardour which theſe inſpired, they obtained a complete victory over their enemies.

Tyrtæus wrote in a ſimilar ſtyle, but entirely confined himſelf to martial ſubjects. So ſtrongly is military valour, and the love of liberty enforced in his little compoſitions, that it would by no means be abſurd to attribute the victories of the Grecians over the Perſians, as much to a Tyrtæus, as to a Miltiades or Themiſtocles. The effects of ſuch political ballads have been frequently ſeen among the Engliſh in a time of a war. Every one has heard of Lillabullero.—Many a poor fellow

low has been tempted to quit the plough and the loom for the ſword, on hearing a ſong in praiſe of Hawke or Wolfe roared by his obſtreperous companions. Theſe verſes are too deficient in point of elegance to admit of quotations, and the frequent opportunities of hearing them from the mouths of the vulgar, render repetition in this place unneceſſary. The bards of Grub-ſtreet are commonly the authors of our martial ballads; but at Athens they were written by poets, ſtateſmen, and philoſophers. We may judge of the influence of their productions, by the powerful effect of our rude and even nonſenſical rhymes.

Few antient authors have been leſs read than Lycophron. His obſcurity not only retards, but diſguſts the reader; yet, perhaps, his want of perſpicuity, though highly diſagreeable to the ſtudent, is an excellence in a work conſiſting of predictions. Prophecies and oracles have ever been purpoſely obſcure, and almoſt unintelligible. The mind that attends to theſe uninſpired predictions of paganiſm, voluntarily renounces reaſon, and believes the more as it underſtands the leſs; but whether Lycophron is to be praiſed or cenſured for obſcurity, certain it is, that on this account he will never become a favourite author. Notwithſtanding the labours of the great Potter, he is ſtill difficult, and will probably continue to repoſe in duſt and darkneſs, amidſt the dull collections of antiquated muſeums.

The poems of Bacchylides, however he is neglected by the moderns, were highly honoured by an antient, who was eſteemed a complete judge of literary merit. Hiero heſitated not to pronounce them ſuperior to the Odes of Pindar, which have been generally celebrated as the utmoſt efforts of human genius. The opinion of Hiero may, however, be queſtioned with an appearance of plauſibility, when it is conſidered, that his character, as a critic, was eſtabliſhed by his courtiers, who, to gain his favour, might not ſcruple to violate the truth.

The gay, the ſprightly, the voluptuous Anacreon is known to every reader. His ſubjects, and his manner of treating them, have captivated all who are ſuſceptible either of pleaſure or of poetry. There is, indeed, an exquiſite tenderneſs, delicacy, and taſte in the ſentiments, but I have always thought he derived no ſmall

ſhare of his beauty from the choice of expreſſions, and the peculiar harmony of his verſes. It has been objected to him by rigid moraliſts, that his writings tend to promote drunkenneſs and debauchery. But this objection might in ſome degree be extended to a great part of the fineſt writers, ancient and modern. A man of ſenſe and judgment will admire the beauties of a compoſition, without ſuffering its ſentiments to influence his principles or his conduct. He will look upon the more licentious ſallies of Anacreontic writers, as little *jeux d'eſprit* deſigned to pleaſe in the hour of convivial feſtivity, but not to regulate his thoughts and actions in the ſerious concerns of life. Whatever may be the moral tendency of his writings, it is certain that as a poet he is unrivalled in that ſpecies of compoſition which he adopted. Many have been the imitations of him, but few have ſucceeded. The joys of love and wine have indeed been deſcribed by his followers, but their touches are more like the dawbings of an unſkilful painter, than the exquiſite traits of a maſter hand. Cowley, whoſe genius certainly partook more of the Anacreontic than of the Pindaric, has been one of his happieſt imitators, for he is rather to be called an imitator than a tranſlator: but the Engliſh reader will not form a juſt idea of the merits of Anacreon, from thoſe Bacchanalian ſongs which ſo frequently appear under the title of Anacreontic.

The paſſion of love was never more ſtrongly felt or deſcribed than by the ſenſible Sappho. The little Greek ode, preſerved by Longinus, the metre of which derives its name from her, has been tranſlated by Mr. Phillips with all the air of an original. The Latin tranſlation of Catullus appears much inferior to that of our countryman. The Greek indeed is much corrupted, and, as it now ſtands, is leſs pleaſing than the Engliſh. Every one, who on reading it recollects its occaſion, muſt lament that ſo warm a paſſion, ſo feelingly repreſented, was excited by an improper object.

Scaliger, whoſe judgment, though ſometimes called in queſtion, ought certainly to have great weight, beſtowed very extraordinary praiſes on the writings of Oppian; a poet, who, though he has been compared to Virgil

Virgil in his Georgics, is only perused by the curious in Grecian literature, and is known only by name to the common reader. The emperor Caracalla, under whom he flourished, is said to have been so charmed with his poems, as to have ordered him a stater for each verse. Modern critics will, however, dare to call in question the taste of Caracalla. The works of Oppian consisted of halieutics, cynogetics, and ixeutics, the latter of which have perished by the injuries of time. He was a grammarian, which, in the idea of the Greeks, meant a professed scholar; and in every age, the works of men, who professed literature, have been less admired than the vigorous and wild productions of uncultivated genius. The former are contented to avoid faults, but genius labours after beauties only. Apollonius is more correct than Homer, and Johnson than Shakespeare; but Apollonius and Johnson are coldly approved, while Homer and Shakespeare are beheld with astonishment almost equal to idolatry. It should however be remarked to the honour of Apollonius, that the judicious Virgil borrowed several of his most celebrated similies from him, and perhaps he is not to be ranked among the *poetæ minores*. Oppian has met with the usual fate of grammarians, and has scarcely been read; but the reader of taste will yet find many passages, which, if they are not sublime, he must confess to be beautiful.

Tryphiodorus has been introduced to the English reader, by the excellent translation of the ingenious Mr. Merrick. Homer he certainly imitated, and has succeeded in the imitation. Copies taken by great masters, though inferior in general, yet in some parts commonly rival their originals. Tryphiodorus reaches not the sublimer flights of the Mæonian bard, but he sometimes follows his less daring excursions at no distant interval. It is enough to recommend him to general approbation, that with a moderate portion of Homer's fire, he has more correctness. He may be read with advantage not only in a poetical, but in an historical view. Where Homer discontinued the thread of his story, Tryphiodorus has taken it up. Indeed this poem is a necessary supplement to the Iliad, without which the reader is left unsatisfied. Tryphiodorus is said to

have written another poem, called Ὀδυσσεια λιπογραμματος, in which he has omitted, through each book, the letter which marked the number of it. Such a kind of compoſition is trifling, and beneath a man of genius; but it muſt be allowed to be a work of great difficulty, and conſequently a proof of great application. Nor ought it to injure the character of Tryphiodorus as a poet, but to be viewed as the wanton production of an ingenious, but ill-employed grammarian. If Homer wrote the battle of the Frogs and Mice, and Virgil deſcanted on his Gnat, without loſing the dignity of their characters; inferior writers may indulge the inoffenſive ſallies of whim, without the imputation of folly or puerility.

In the peruſal of ſome of theſe, and other of the Minor Poets, whoſe works are extant, the lover of the Grecian Muſe finds a pleaſing variety, after reading the more ſublime and beautiful productions of Homer.

No. CLXXIX. A CONCLUDING ESSAY.

THE writers of periodical papers have uſually ſubjoined, at the cloſe of their lucubrations, an account of the origin and progreſs of their work, explained the ſignatures of correſpondents, and aſſigned each paper to its proper claimant.—I am now arrived at the End of the Second Volume, the boundary preſcribed to my excurſions: but I have, I believe, no information of this kind remaining to be communicated. I have already accounted for the origin of this work, and intimated, that the compoſition of it has ſerved, at various times and in different ſituations, to amuſe a few intervals of literary leiſure; and, with reſpect to aſſiſtants and correſpondents, the nature of the undertaking could not poſſibly admit them. If, therefore, any praiſe ſhould be thought due, it muſt come undivided, and contribute to leſſen whatever ſeverity of cenſure may be incurred, the whole weight of which muſt fall without participation.

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I mean not, however, to delude myſelf with an idea of influencing a reader by apologies: the ſubmiſſions and excuſes of authors are of little importance; the Public claims an uncontrovertible right to decide for itſelf on every compoſition which ſolicits regard: its final deciſions are uſually no leſs juſt than immutable.

Inſtead then of dwelling on ſuch topics, I will take leave of the candid reader, if any reader ſhould have had patience to accompany me ſo far, by a ſummary recapitulation, and perhaps addition of a few admonitions which may be ſalutary. I pretend not to collect all the ſcattered remarks, which have preceded, into one point of view, but merely to repeat and add ſuch as may poſſibly occur in filling up the paper which now lies before me. I hope the egotiſm will be pardoned on this and ſeveral other occaſions, as it is by no means eaſy at all times to ſpeak in the third perſon of one's ſelf, without evident affectation.

I have endeavoured, throughout the whole ſeries of theſe papers, to warn thoſe who are entering into life (and to them my admonitions are chiefly addreſſed) againſt the faſhionable examples of the *rich and great vulgar*, which often militate againſt all that is decent, regular, virtuous, and learned. Unleſs we are taught in our youth to be on our guard againſt their deſtructive influence, we ſhall certainly incur imminent danger of corrupting our principles and practice, by a blind and bigoted imitation. Experience daily evinces, that, without this precaution, all the advantages of a virtuous and learned education, all the documents of paternal care, all prudential, moral, and religious reſtraints, may be totally fruſtrated. The rich and great may be conſidered as beacons on a promontory; and if they hang out deceitful lights, they who will allow no other ſignal to direct them (and the number of theſe is infinite) will probably be miſguided in the voyage of their lives, till they are daſhed on rocks, or ſunk in whirlpools. I think I can confidently declare, that I was not influenced by ſplenetic or envious motives, when I attacked the Pride, Folly, and Wickedneſs of the *nominal great*, who juſtify every enormity, under the name of faſhionable indulgence; but that I have been actuated ſolely by a

ncere conviction, that such an attack is the most effectual means of promoting the interests of Virtue. Even n enemy will allow that it is not the most approved mehod of advancing private interest.

In adopting modes of address and external behaviour, he study of which appears to engross the attention of any, I have advised the young man to begin his work at he foundation; to correct his heart and temper, that the races of his appearance may proceed from that copious nd infallible source of whatever is pleasing, a disposition uly virtuous and unaffectedly amiable. I have exhortl him to avoid servility, adulation, preferment-hunting, d meanness of every kind; to endeavour indeed to ease those with whom he converses, but to let the enavour arise from benevolent motives, from an humane l Christian desire of diffusing ease and happiness ong the children of one Almighty Father, and the takers of the same miserable nature. I have advised to be firm, yet gentle,—manly, yet polite: to cule every ornamental accomplishment which leads *not* feminacy, and to study to be as agreeable as possible, e he can be at the same time sincere; to despise, noft studiously avoid, that common but base char, which, with motives peculiarly selfish and con:d, pretends to uncommon good-nature, friendship, olence, and generosity; whose assiduities are proned to the rank or fortune of the persons whose is courted, without the least regard to virtue or uents; whose politeness is that of a valet or French g-master, and whose objects, after all its professd pretensions to liberality, are no less mean and an those of a Jew-usurer. I have advised him e the approbation of his own heart, and the s of a clear conscience, above the smiles, the apand the rewards of a vain, a wicked, a dend a transitory world.

rature, I have recommended the union of taste nce, and of science with taste; a selection of uthors on all the subjects which claim his parention; a love of originals, and a due distrust ions; a constant effort to obtain depth and a persevering, regular, indefatigable industry,

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eſpecially in the earlier periods of a ſtudious courſe, not only becauſe no diſtinguiſhed excellence can be obtained without it, but alſo becauſe a cloſe attention to ſtudy, and an ardent love of letters in the juvenile age, is a great preſervative of innocence, and conduces much to the diverſion or extinction of paſſions and tendencies, which cannot be habitually indulged without ſin, ſhame, and miſery.

The general tenor of the moral admonitions of this book, has been to urge the young man to labour inceſſantly in overcoming the natural propenſity of human nature to evil: to aim at perfection, though he knows he cannot reach it; to aim at it, becauſe he will thus approach much nearer to it than if he gives up the purſuit in the timidity of indolence: to have courage enough to withſtand ridicule, the weapon of the wicked in their ſubtle attacks upon virtue: to beware of the refinements of ſophiſtry, and to be humble enough to learn his duty both to God and man, from the plain doctrines of his catechiſm: to beware alſo of the ſeducing influence of faſhionable vice; of thoſe unfortunate perſons who, from a want of education, or from fooliſh pride, *live without God in the world*, and even in contradiction to the obvious precepts of natural religion; exiſting in a ſtate which might almoſt be called the vegetable, if it did not in a greater degree participate of brutality.—Addreſſes of a ſerious kind are to them, for the moſt part, uſeleſs, as that pride, ſelf-conceit, and ſelf-importance, which leads them to adopt with oſtentation the tenets of infidelity and the practices of immorality, uſually renders them deaf and blind to all repreſentations which come *unrecommended by opulence, rank, and libertiniſm*. They are wiſer in their own eyes, though they often neither read nor think, than the wiſeſt moraliſts who have yet appeared. But the young man who has been taught not to be dazzled by the falſe luſtre of their characters, will ſoon learn to pity their errors and ſhun their example. It is a juſt remark, which has been made by men intimately acquainted with the living world, that more are ruined by vices which they have adopted through vanity and ſilly imitation, than to which they have been ſeduced by

by the violence of paſſion and temptation. He who leſſens the force of ſuch examples, and obſcures thoſe gloſſy colours which they derive from high ſtations and large fortunes, greatly promotes the cauſe of morality, and contributes much to prevent the miſery and ruin of a riſing generation.

In forming political principles, I would uniformly maintain the expediency of always leaning to the ſide of liberty and the people, and of withſtanding, by all legal and rational means, the encroachments of power. All men who poſſeſs power, well eſtabliſhed and confirmed, are naturally inclined to extend and engroſs it. Let a ſpirit then be conſtantly encouraged among the people at large, which may lead them to a jealous vigilance over the poſſeſſors of power, and animate them to a manly reſiſtance on the ſlighteſt infringement of liberty. But at the ſame time, we muſt not ſuffer the artful purſuers of their own intereſt to delude us by a name enchanting in the ſound: we are bound to conſider, in our diſpaſſionate moments, the nature of liberty; to ſee and acknowledge the neceſſity of ſubordination, and the happineſs of being governed by the equitable operation of impartial laws; to conſider the preſervation of good order and public tranquillity as greatly conducive to the perpetuation of liberty, when it is once eſtabliſhed on a ſolid baſis: to diſtinguiſh between a real love of liberty and a mere impatience of controul, which is found to prevail in the boſom of envious and malignant men: to diſcern the difference between real patriotiſm and a ſelfiſh oppoſition to preſent authority, in whomſoever inveſted, ariſing from a hope of partaking of it on their deprivation: to remember that experience has abundantly confirmed the remark, that the loudeſt advocates for liberty, while out of power, are often the moſt arbitrary and tyrannical, both in the exerciſe of power, when they have obtained it, and in their private life and natural diſpoſitions: to beware of the needy adventurer in politics, who has nothing to loſe, and has no proſpect of gain but in demoliſhing the fabric raiſed by others, and enriching himſelf in the general plunder. Such cautions can never be too frequently repeated to the middle

middle ranks, who have been too frequently deluded by the wicked pretenſions of pſeudo-patriots.

I have endeavoured to evince the propriety of appointing men of private virtue and good character, to the great, honourable, and efficient offices in the various departments of the ſtate. It is difficult to conceive but that the accumulation of public honours and emoluments on profeſſed infidels, on notorious gameſters, and on infamous debauchees, is at once deſtructive of morality, religion, and national proſperity. If, for inſtance, a Chancellor of Great Britain, whoſe office is peculiarly ſacred, who has the diſpoſal of church preferment, and whoſe life ought to have been free from infamous enormities, and whoſe character, no leſs unimpeached than that of an archbiſhop, ſhould be ſtigmatized as a ſeducer of innocence, ſhould live in a ſtate of concubinage at the time in which he holds his venerable office, and evidently ſhew, *by his conduct*, a contempt for that union of the ſexes which the laws of his country, and of his God, have inſtituted; would it not be ſuch an inſult on virtue, religion, decency, and *equity*, as all, whoſe feelings are not deſtroyed by diſſipation, muſt deeply deplore and reſent?—Could upſtart inſolence, a brow-beating audacity, and a dogmatical mode of deciſion, in the ſenate and at the tribunal, compenſate the injuries which ſuch an example muſt inflict, not only on the morals of a ſingle profeſſion already too licentious, but of the community in all its ramifications? The promotion of ſuch men, publicly known for the badneſs of their private life, argues a want of ſincerity in governors, and eventually tends, more than any foreign enemy, to ſhake their thrones from under them. Reſiſtance, indeed, under governors who act, in their appointment of miniſters and officers, as if they conſidered the national religion merely as a mode of ſuperſtition, and morality as a baſeleſs fabric of fancy or policy, and who yet aſſume the management of the church as well as of the ſtate, and claim the title of Defenders of the Faith, becomes virtue inſtead of treaſon, and patriotiſm inſtead of rebellion. He who militates againſt ſuch men, engages in a rational and an honourable croiſade. No Turk

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was ever a greater enemy to the religion of Jesus Christ, than such *most sacred* and *most Christian* Governors.

It is certainly right to disbelieve and to reprobate all pretensions to public virtue, wherever private virtue is *notoriously* deficient. Where private virtue is wanting, there can be no soundness of principle, and, without soundness of principle, no real virtue of any kind can subsist. Patriotism in a bad man is but disguised wickedness, of a most malignant nature, and usually proceeding from a deceitful, a proud, an envious, a jealous, a cruel, and a selfish disposition. The boasted abilities of profligate and corrupt characters, are often but the desperate efforts of a distress which has overcome all diffidence and restraint, and leads men to fight their way to promotion, by noise, effrontery, and overbearing presumption.

We all, indeed, love power, and it is an useful impulse which urges us to aspire at eminence; but though we may reasonably wish for a share of power, let us learn the virtue not to obstruct its salutary operation in the hands of others, merely because it is not in our own. The truest patriotism may often be evinced, by subduing the lust of power, by submissive silence, and by cheerful acquiescence, in a contented retirement, and in an humble exercise of the private and social virtues. The lust of power, like all other lust, is often most violent in diabolical dispositions, and the turbulent spirit which it produces is the bane of society.

But amidst our cautions, we shall do well constantly to remember that liberty, with all its attendant evils of faction and sedition, is, upon the whole, infinitely more conducive to the happiness and to the improvement of human nature, than the tranquil repose of established despotism. An arbitrary government diffuses a benumbing, freezing, soporific influence over the human faculties, especially in the middle and lowest walks of life; and there is no danger or inconvenience which ought not to be cheerfully incurred to destroy it from the face of the earth. The tree of liberty, so well planted and watered in America, will, I hope, flourish more and more; and impart many a slip and sucker to grow

grow in climates which now appear moſt ungenial to its cultivation. In our own iſland, we muſt never neglect the opportunity afforded, by a time of diſtreſs, to correct the abuſes of the conſtitution, and to puſh back the gigantic ſtrides of power, with its auxiliary, corruption. Such are the auſpicious periods, the golden moments, in which a portion of new health is to be infuſed into the vitals of the body politic: ſuch the times in which the people themſelves ought to amputate excreſcences, and purge that corrupting influence which contains the ſeeds of diſeaſe and death to a free commonwealth; in which the right of election ſhould be communicated to all who pay taxes to a certain amount, petty boroughs disfranchiſed, and counties enabled to ſend a number of members in proportion to their ſize, wealth, and populouſneſs; in which Old Sarum ſhould no longer be permitted to conſtitute as many repreſentatives of the people of England as the county of York, and half as many as the metropolis of the empire.

It is impoſſible to recapitulate all the variety of ſuggeſtions which have preceded, or to make any great addition to them, in the limits of a ſingle paper; neither was it my original intention. It is ſufficient that a few of the moſt important points are touched upon in the concluſion of theſe volumes, with a view to leave a due impreſſion on the mind of the reader, who may be induced, for want of ſomething better, to beſtow an idle hour on their peruſal. The ſubjects of Behaviour, Letters, Morals, and Politics, have been already mentioned: it would be a reprehenſible omiſſion not to have reſerved a place for a few hints on Religion.

It appears to me to be one of the moſt important precepts, in forming our religious principles and ideas not fully to depend on the concluſions of our own reaſon; to diſtruſt the acuteſt underſtanding; to be really humble; to reverence the opinions received by our forefathers; to remember the ſhortneſs of life, the imbecility of human nature, and to accept with pious hope, rather than with diſputatious curioſity, the comfortable doctrines and promiſes of the received revelation. It will be a great inducement to this prime virtue of humility, to reflect on the diſeaſes and pains both of mind and body incident to

to our nature; on the terrible degeneracy into which we may fall, when deserted by the grace of God; and, at the same time, on the consolation and improvement of heart which may be, and is, derived, under every calamity and on the bed of death, from sincere devotion; to pray for faith when doubts arise; to beware of that weak and wicked vanity which instigates the deistical and sceptical pretenders to superior powers of reasoning, to write and publish their sophistical and presumptuous tenets on the national religion. Let us ever remember that common but excellent maxim, that we can lose nothing but what would hurt us, and may gain every thing that is valuable, by receiving, with humble hope, the religion of Jesus Christ.

Upon the whole, and after all the subtle disquisitions of proud philosophy; all the inventions which owe their origin to malice, vanity, or ingenuity; all the whimsical modes of living and thinking which Fashion dictates for the employment of her idle hours, or for the gratification of her full-blown pride; the plain virtues, as they are understood by plain men of honest hearts and good faculties, improved by a competent education, are the best security for comfort under all the circumstances, and in all situations of human life. Sedentary and recluse persons may amuse themselves, in the reveries of inactivity, with speculative refinement and sceptical subtleties; but they who are really wise, and earnestly willi to obtain all the happiness of which they are capable in this sublunary state, must descend from the elevated regions of sophistry, and labour to acquire, with the assistance of common sense and common honesty, the virtues of faith, humility, piety, and benevolence.—I am happy in the opportunity of adding my testimony, inconsiderable as it may be esteemed, that all plans of conduct, and prospects of happiness, independent of these virtues, must terminate in vanity and vexation; and that these shall supply a perennial fountain of such consolation as the world can neither give nor take away.

FINIS.